

Transcript of the Testimony of **Public Meeting**

Date taken: April 6, 2021

Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion Project

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US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT

DRAFT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
FOR THE PROPOSED
MID-BARATARIA SEDIMENT DIVERSION

PUBLIC MEETING PRESENTATION

VIRTUAL (via Webex)
Tuesday, April 6, 2021
9:00 a.m. CST

1 PANELISTS:

2

PERRY FRANKLIN - Moderator

3

BRAD LABORDE - USACE

4

JEFF VARISCO - USACE

5

NIK RICHARD - USACE

6

MEL LANDRY - NOAA/TIG

7

BRAD BARTH - CPRA Applicant

8

LIZ DAVOLI - CPRA

9

BRIAN LEZINA - CPRA

10

11 TRANSLATORS:

12 OFELIA SOTO (Spanish)

13

JOHN NGUYEN (Vietnamese)

14

BOUY TE (Kmer)

15

COURT REPORTER:

16

LINDA G. GRIFFIN, RPR

17

Certified Court Reporter

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* * *

MR. FRANKLIN:

Good morning. My name is Perry Franklin and I will serve as your facilitator for the Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion Virtual Public Meeting.

Today we will be talking about the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, or more commonly known as the EIS, and Draft Natural Resource Damage Assessment Restoration Plan, or commonly known as the RP, for the proposed Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion Project. Please keep in mind that both of these documents are still in draft form and today we are requesting your feedback to make our final decision.

Thank you for your interest in this proposed project and for attending today's virtual meeting. Whether you are listening in via telephone or your computer's audio, please know that we have all incoming audio muted at this time.

1 If you are experiencing
2 technical difficulties and would like to
3 request assistance, please use the
4 questions box, which is located on the
5 right-hand side of the webinar
6 interface, and we will try to help you.

7 We have a court reporter who
8 will transcribe the entire meeting,
9 including your important comments. We
10 are also joined by several language
11 translators, who will be introduced
12 shortly.

13 The recording of today's
14 webinar will be posted on the U.S. Army
15 Corps of Engineers webpage, along with
16 the written transcript of this morning's
17 meeting in the near future. We will
18 share that link with you in the chat
19 box. The PowerPoint presentation and
20 today's transcript will also be posted
21 on the Deepwater Horizon Trustee Council
22 website.

23 When you registered for the
24 webinar, you were asked if you would
25 like to make a verbal comment. We have

1 received a number of requests and have
2 responded to each person via email, with
3 instructions on how to make verbal
4 comments to our listening panel. After
5 the presentation portion of the webinar,
6 we will take your public comments.

7 If you didn't make a request to
8 provide a public comment before this
9 meeting, that's okay, as it's not too
10 late to speak. We will explain how to
11 do this shortly.

12 One last note, if you are
13 joining us only via phone and are not
14 connected to the webinar system, you
15 will not be able to make a comment
16 during this meeting. If you are calling
17 in over the phone and you are not
18 connected to a computer and would like
19 to make a public comment, please call
20 866-211-9205 -- again, that's
21 866-211-9205 -- at any time before May
22 4th. We will review all methods for
23 submitting public comments towards the
24 end of this morning's webinar.

25 Now I'd like to introduce you

1 to the folks that you will be hearing
2 from tonight, either live or via video
3 recording.

4 In addition to myself, you will
5 hear from Brad LaBorde, who is with the
6 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Brad
7 Barth, from the Louisiana Coastal
8 Protection and Restoration Authority (or
9 CPRA), as well as Mel Landry, who
10 represents the National Oceanic and
11 Atmospheric Administration (or commonly
12 known as NOAA).

13 We also have several language
14 translators with us today who will
15 translate any public comments that are
16 received in Spanish, Vietnamese, or
17 Khmer. There will be more on this
18 later.

19 As a reminder, this webinar
20 will be recorded. We thank you in
21 advance for using respectful language
22 during your public comment and for
23 adhering to the three-minute rule per
24 your comment.

25 All comments will be made

1 available to the public and gathered as
2 a part of the public record.

3 The public comment period is
4 open, again, until May 4th. We are
5 accepting public comments in a number of
6 ways, including written comment by U.S.
7 Mail, electronic comments via our
8 web-based system, voicemail on a free
9 phone line, and this morning, during our
10 public comment portion of the webinar,
11 which will follow the presentations.

12 Please note that you only need
13 to submit your comment via one of these
14 ways for it to become a part of the
15 public record.

16 This morning's webinar will
17 start with approximately 35 minutes of
18 video presentations, which cover details
19 of the proposed project. Then we will
20 move into the public comment portion of
21 the webinar. The webinar will run for a
22 total of three hours.

23 The video that will be shown
24 shortly is in English, but if you would
25 like to listen to the video in Spanish,

1 Vietnamese or Khmer, we have audio
2 recordings available at toll-free
3 numbers that will be listed on the
4 following slides.

5 Now, we will hear from each of
6 our translators we have with us today.
7 First will be Spanish, then Vietnamese,
8 and finally Khmer. Ms. Soto.

9 MS. SOTO:

10 Thank you. (Spanish
11 translation). Gracias.

12 MR. FRANKLIN:

13 Thank you very much.
14 Mr. Nguyen.

15 MR. NGUYEN:

16 Good morning. (Vietnamese
17 translation). Thank you.

18 MR. FRANKLIN:

19 Thank you, Mr. Nguyen. Mr. Te.
20 Mr. Te, you are on mute.

21 MR. TE:

22 (Khmer translation).

23 MR. FRANKLIN:

24 Thank you, to our translators,
25 and at this time we will transition to

1 the video presentation.

2 (Video presentation as
3 follows:)

4 MR. LaBORDE:

5 Hello, and welcome to the
6 public meeting presentation for the
7 proposed Mid-Barataria Sediment
8 Diversion Project. My name is Brad
9 LaBorde. I'm the Regulatory Project
10 Manager for the proposed Mid-Barataria
11 Sediment Diversion Project, and part of
12 the Corps of Engineers review team in
13 charge of developing this Environmental
14 Impact Statement, or EIS, here at the
15 New Orleans District.

16 This prerecorded presentation
17 is available to you on the Corps of
18 Engineers Mid-Barataria Project webpage.
19 Myself and the Corps review team thank
20 you for sacrificing your time to
21 actively participate and provide your
22 feedback on this draft EIS. Ideally, we
23 would host these public meetings in
24 person, but due to the ongoing public
25 health crisis, we cannot at this time.

1 Again, we thank you for your
2 participation, under these
3 circumstances.

4 There are three presentations
5 available to you. Each will cover a
6 different aspect of the Proposed
7 Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion Project
8 Review. The Corps presentation will
9 identify engaged parties and outline our
10 roles in this review, provide an update
11 since the scoping period, show you how
12 and where to submit your comments, and
13 then I'll walk you through the draft EIS
14 to help with your review.

15 Brad Barth, from the Coastal
16 Protection and Restoration Authority, or
17 CPRA, will present project-specific
18 information about the Proposed
19 Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion
20 Project.

21 Mel Landry, from the National
22 Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration,
23 or NOAA, has a presentation covering
24 another key document the EIS will inform,
25 the Draft Phase II Restoration Plan.

1 NOAA is presenting on behalf of the
2 Louisiana Trustee Implementation Group,
3 or TIG.

4 During our live, virtual
5 meetings, the prerecorded presentations
6 will run in the order shown here.

7 It is important for you to
8 understand the roles each of us play in
9 this process. First is the public. Your
10 feedback is valuable to us.

11 In 2017, we held scoping
12 meetings, and asked, "What would you
13 like to see analyzed?" Now, we are
14 coming to you once again with a draft
15 EIS to ask, "How did we do," so that we
16 can consider your comments for the final
17 EIS.

18 The Corps is the lead federal
19 agency in preparing the EIS. Due to the
20 complexity of the proposed Mid-Barataria
21 Sediment Diversion Project Review, the
22 Corps has an independent third-party
23 contractor, with a team of subject
24 matter experts, to help analyze
25 information in preparing the EIS.

1 The Corps' role is strictly in a
2 regulatory capacity. We are neither an
3 opponent, nor a proponent of the
4 proposed Mid-Barataria Sediment
5 Diversion Project. We are tasked with
6 making sure the EIS is based on the best
7 available science, engineering and
8 professional judgment.

9 Publishing the draft EIS is
10 another milestone in our ongoing review.
11 The Corps' decision to deny, approve or
12 proffer a least damaging alternative
13 will not be made until after the final
14 EIS.

15 In addition to our independent
16 third-party contractor, the Corps has
17 assistance from cooperating agencies who
18 also have teams of experts to assist
19 with analyzing information and drafting
20 the EIS. Many cooperating agencies also
21 use the EIS to inform their laws and
22 regulations. CPRA is a proponent of the
23 proposed Mid-Barataria Sediment
24 Diversion Project. The project is part
25 of their larger Coastal Master Plan.

1 CPRA is proposing to construct, operate
2 and maintain this project.

3 The TIG is made up of a number
4 of federal and state agencies, which
5 includes some cooperating agencies and
6 CPRA that will be using the EIS as a
7 tool to help determine whether or not to
8 fund CPRA's proposed project.

9 The Corps is not a TIG agency,
10 but we work closely with the TIG and
11 other cooperating agencies to agree to
12 the EIS schedule and processes leading
13 up to the publication of the draft EIS.

14 This shows some of our key
15 milestones, starting with the public
16 scoping process in July 2017.

17 During the scoping period, you
18 gave us great feedback, submitting over
19 870 comments. We took your comments and
20 asked CPRA to respond to them, which
21 required them to use a number of
22 scientific models and draft a series of
23 technical reports.

24 CPRA's modeling information and
25 technical reports were reviewed by the

1 Corps and our independent third-party
2 contractor, the TIG, and our other
3 cooperating agencies. The Corps'
4 independent third-party contractor then
5 drafted the EIS, chapter by chapter,
6 based, in part, by CPRA's modeling and
7 technical reports, the TIG, and
8 cooperating agency comments, and other
9 best available science.

10 The comment period from
11 March 5th to May 4th, 2021, is your
12 opportunity to submit your feedback and
13 answer the question of, "How did we do."
14 Your feedback will again be considered
15 for the final EIS.

16 Once complete, the final EIS
17 will have another comment period, and
18 lead to the Corps record of decision, or
19 permit decision, scheduled for spring of
20 next year.

21 Since I've mentioned it a few
22 times now, let's walk through the Corps
23 Mid-Barataria Project webpage. On the
24 right, in purple, you will find
25 materials related to our live virtual

1 meetings, under the "Draft EIS Meeting
2 Materials" title. All Corps Draft EIS
3 public notices and links for the
4 presentations can be found here.

5 After our live virtual
6 meetings, the recordings will be placed
7 under the "DEIS Meeting Recordings"
8 title. And under the "Previous
9 Meetings" title, the 2017 Scoping
10 Meeting Presentation is available, in
11 case you need a refresher about the
12 Corps' regulatory involvement or a
13 better understanding of the EIS process.

14 On the right, in green, we have
15 information about ways to submit your
16 written and oral comments. I will show
17 you the comment portal on the next
18 slide.

19 Below that, in gold, you will
20 see "EIS Documents." It is where the
21 entire draft EIS and 2017 Scoping Report
22 are stored. If you click "Draft EIS," a
23 box will open, as shown in the call-out.
24 Place your cursor over the chapter you
25 wish to review and click. Shortly

1 after, a PDF version of that chapter
2 will open.

3 At the bottom here, I provided
4 the link, but if you Google "Corps
5 Mid-Barataria," the top result should be
6 this page. The second result should be
7 another link, shown here for the
8 permitting dashboard.

9 This example is for another
10 project, but it gives you an idea of
11 what to expect when you access the
12 comment portal. It will have a project
13 page first. If you click the "Comment
14 Now" box, it will direct you to another
15 page where you can enter your name,
16 location and comment in the available
17 fields, as shown here.

18 Please notice that the comment
19 portal is located on the National Park
20 Service website. We are using this site
21 because it helps us manage and sort the
22 comments you submit for the draft EIS
23 and Restoration Plan. The Corps and the
24 TIG have full access to the materials
25 submitted here, in realtime, so you

1 should have no concerns using this for
2 your commenting.

3 Now that I've discussed the
4 engaged parties, updated you on our
5 milestones, and showed you how to
6 navigate the Corps Mid-Barataria Project
7 webpage, I'll turn it over to Brad Barth
8 and Mel Landry for their presentations.

9 MR. BARTH:

10 Hi, everyone, and thank you for
11 joining us today. I'm Brad Barth, the
12 Mid-Basin Sediment Diversion Program
13 Manager with the Louisiana Coastal
14 Protection and Restoration Authority.
15 Today I'll be sharing some information
16 specific to the Mid-Barataria Sediment
17 Diversion Project.

18 As I mentioned, I'm with CPRA,
19 the State of Louisiana's single state
20 agency responsible for spearheading all
21 effort related to coastal protection and
22 restoration. This includes developing
23 Louisiana's Coastal Master Plan, which
24 is a tool that helps the state
25 prioritize funding and the

1 implementation of coastal restoration
2 projects across our coast.

3 Sediment divisions are the
4 cornerstone projects of the Master Plan,
5 designed to reconnect the Mississippi
6 River to our starved basins and
7 reestablish the natural land-building
8 processes that originally built our
9 delta.

10 There are numerous factors that
11 have contributed to Louisiana's land
12 loss crisis. As some of you know, our
13 state has lost over 2,000 square miles
14 of land since the 1930s. Barataria
15 Basin, the proposed project location,
16 has actually experienced some of the
17 highest rates of land loss in the world.

18 There are several causes for
19 our land loss, including sea level rise
20 and subsidence, where the water level in
21 the Gulf continues to rise as our land
22 continues to sink, as well as other
23 effects of climate change.

24 Barataria Basin is also home to
25 some of the wetlands that were most

1 heavily oiled during the Deepwater
2 Horizon oil spill. The extensive oiling
3 and subsequent response activity
4 significantly accelerated land loss in
5 this area.

6 Other man-made contributions,
7 like privately-owned projects in oil and
8 gas canals, have caused land loss. And
9 probably most importantly, our current
10 levee system, which protects our
11 communities, has cut off the Mississippi
12 River from depositing sediment,
13 nutrients and fresh water into our
14 basins.

15 This natural land-building
16 process, where the Mississippi River
17 deposits sediment, sand, silts and clays
18 to strengthen and nourish our marshes is
19 how coastal Louisiana was built, in the
20 first place.

21 As you can see here, when we
22 built our current levee system, the red
23 lines on the map on the right, we
24 restricted the river from strengthening
25 and building our marshes. A sediment

1 diversion is designed to reconnect the
2 river and reestablish the natural flow
3 of sediment and nutrients out into our
4 basins.

5 Sediment diversions, including
6 the Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion,
7 are projects the State of Louisiana has
8 been planning and working on for
9 decades. Plans to reconnect the river
10 are not new, but planning for the
11 Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion picked
12 up momentum in the 1980s with both state
13 and federal agencies.

14 By the late 2000s, significant
15 sediment and river data collection
16 efforts in support of sediment
17 diversions began. This data collection
18 continues to this day.

19 In 2011, the Mid-Barataria
20 Sediment Diversion was proposed at River
21 Mile 61 to optimize the power of the
22 river and the land-building potential.

23 In 2012, the Coastal Master
24 Plan recommended the project as a
25 priority. As such, CPRA embarked on the

1 engineering, design and permitting of
2 the project.

3 The 2017 Coastal Master Plan
4 again recommended the project as a
5 cornerstone project. Cornerstone
6 projects are Louisiana's best tools to
7 build and sustain land.

8 The proposed project location
9 is in Plaquemines Parish, on the west
10 bank of the Mississippi River, at River
11 Mile 61, near the town of Ironton.

12 And here, you'll see a visual
13 rendering of what the project might look
14 like, once constructed. The Mississippi
15 River is at the bottom of your screen,
16 flowing from right to left, and the
17 basin is located at the top of the
18 screen.

19 Features include an inlet basin
20 in the Mississippi River, a gate
21 complex, consisting of a U-frame and a
22 gate structure, a guide levee and
23 channel system, and an outlet basin.

24 During high river, sediment
25 enters the inlet basin, flows through

1 the gate complex, guide levees and
2 channel, and through the outlet basin
3 where the sediment is then slowed to
4 begin deposition and formation of new
5 land.

6 The gate complex allows for
7 control and closure of the diversion
8 during critical times, such as a
9 tropical storm or hurricane events. As
10 such, the gate complex is integrated
11 with our current levee systems.

12 Other features include bridges
13 for Louisiana Highway 23 and the New
14 Orleans Gulf Coast Railroad.

15 So moving forward, it's
16 important to understand all the
17 coordinating agencies and entities
18 involved in this process. CPRA is the
19 agency in Louisiana responsible for
20 planning, engineering and design of the
21 project. We work in close coordination
22 with the lead federal agency, United
23 States Army Corps of Engineers, to
24 provide them information, as needed,
25 where CPRA is the applicant for the

1 Joint Section 10/404 Permit Application.

2 I will now turn it over to Mel
3 Landry, with the Louisiana Trustee
4 Implementation Group, or Louisiana TIG,
5 who will explain the Louisiana TIG's
6 role in this process.

7 MR. LANDRY:

8 Hi, I'm Mel Landry and I'm with
9 the National Oceanic and Atmospheric
10 Administration, commonly referred to as
11 NOAA. In this presentation, I'll
12 introduce you to the Louisiana Trustee
13 Implementation Group and our role in the
14 Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion.

15 The Louisiana Trustee
16 Implementation Group, or LA TIG, is the
17 group coordinating federal and state
18 agencies responsible for overseeing the
19 use of the Deepwater Horizon Natural
20 Resource Damages settlement dollars
21 allocated to Louisiana.

22 The Louisiana TIG drafted the
23 Restoration Plan, which is the document
24 that details the evaluation and
25 recommendation of the LA TIG to fund the

1 construction of the Mid-Barataria
2 Sediment Diversion, to restore resources
3 injured by the Deepwater Horizon spill.

4 The Deepwater Horizon spill
5 began nearly 11 years ago, on
6 April 20th, 2010, when the Deepwater
7 Horizon drilling rig exploded off the
8 coast of Louisiana and sank to the
9 floor, a mile deep in the Gulf of
10 Mexico, 50 miles off the coast of
11 Louisiana.

12 11 workers on the rig lost
13 their lives, and oil flowed from the sea
14 floor for 87 days. The Barataria Basin
15 was the epicenter of oiled wetlands.
16 Oil worsened existing erosion, and
17 efforts to clean up the oil resulted in
18 additional wetland damage.

19 The agencies that are now
20 members of the Louisiana TIG, as well as
21 other agencies in states across the
22 Gulf, immediately began collecting data
23 to determine the extent of the injuries
24 caused by the spill.

25 Even before the full extent of

1 the damage was known, the agencies began
2 work to restore the ecosystem, through
3 \$1 billion in early restoration funds
4 provided by BP.

5 Five years ago, in 2016, the
6 agencies reached a settlement with BP
7 and the responsible parties, that
8 provided up to \$8.8 billion in funding
9 to restore the natural resources damaged
10 across the Gulf of Mexico by the spill.

11 Over half of that funding, \$5
12 billion, is allocated to the Louisiana
13 restoration area and is managed by the
14 Louisiana TIG. Of that 5 billion, over
15 \$4 billion are allocated to restoring
16 and conserving habitat in Louisiana.

17 This large investment in
18 habitat in Louisiana is in recognition
19 not only of the large impact to the
20 state, but also the benefit that the
21 restoration of that habitat can provide
22 to the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem.

23 Our work on Deepwater Horizon
24 restoration is guided by the
25 Programmatic Damage Assessment and

1 Restoration Plan, which we refer to as
2 the PDARP. The PDARP was part of the
3 settlement and is the overarching
4 Restoration Plan that guides the
5 development of all other subsequent
6 restoration plans. The PDARP does not
7 state exactly what projects should occur
8 where, but it does guide us in the
9 selection of the types of projects that
10 we might plan throughout the entire Gulf
11 of Mexico region.

12 The PDARP recognizes the
13 potential value of large-scale sediment
14 diversions in restoring the resources
15 injured by the spill.

16 Building on the framework
17 provided by the PDARP, in 2018, the
18 Louisiana TIG finalized a Barataria
19 Basin Strategic Restoration Plan that
20 identified a combination of restoration
21 approaches that would support
22 restoration of the injuries in the
23 Barataria Basin.

24 That plan identified three
25 projects for further development and

1 evaluation, Large-Scale Barataria Marsh
2 Creation, Spanish Pass Ridge and Marsh
3 Restoration, and the Mid-Barataria
4 Sediment Diversion.

5 Large-Scale Barataria Marsh
6 Creation and Spanish Pass Ridge and
7 Marsh Restoration each underwent design
8 and evaluation in subsequent Phase II
9 restoration plans and have been funded
10 for construction.

11 Today we're here to present to
12 you and hear your input on the Phase II
13 Restoration Plan 3.2 for the
14 Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion.

15 The objectives of the
16 Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion are to
17 restore injuries from the Deepwater
18 Horizon oil spill, to deliver fresh
19 water, sediment and nutrients to the
20 Barataria Basin through a Large-Scale
21 Sediment Diversion, to reconnect and
22 reestablish sustainable deltaic
23 processes between the Mississippi River
24 and the Barataria Basin, and to create,
25 restore and sustain wetlands and other

1 deltaic habitats.

2 By redirecting freshwater
3 sediment and nutrients from the
4 Mississippi into the Barataria Basin,
5 the diversion is projected to create or
6 sustain over 17,000 acres of marsh, at
7 its peak. Based on the sea level rise
8 scenario used in our evaluation, the
9 total acreage created or sustained is
10 reduced by Year 50, but is still
11 substantial.

12 Critically, at that point, the
13 marshes created or sustained by the
14 diversion represent 20 percent of all
15 the marsh that is projected to remain in
16 the Barataria Basin. The wetlands
17 created and sustained by the diversion
18 will restore injuries caused by the
19 Deepwater Horizon spill by creating
20 habitat and supporting the many
21 resources that rely on that habitat.

22 Some of the key benefits of the
23 diversion are comprehensive and
24 sustainable regional ecosystem
25 restoration. The diversion is designed

1 to maintain created wetlands over a
2 long period of time without additional
3 construction.

4 The diversion creates and
5 protects coastal marshes that provide
6 habitat and reduce storm surge during
7 large storms.

8 The diversion is anticipated to
9 improve the effectiveness and longevity
10 of other marsh restoration projects,
11 including the nearby projects that work
12 to restore the Barataria land bridge.

13 The diversion will provide
14 aquatic and terrestrial species
15 benefits, including large mouth bass,
16 red drum, Gulf menhaden, bay anchovy,
17 white shrimp and blue crab. It also
18 will provide recreational use benefits,
19 such as duck hunting, bird watching, and
20 fishing.

21 A key to the success of the
22 project is being able to monitor and
23 adapt the project, based on what we
24 learn. There is no other project like
25 this in the world, so our analysis of

1 the project's potential effect is based
2 on extensive computer and large-scale
3 physical modeling that help us
4 understand how the river, the diversion
5 and the basin work.

6 Once the diversion is
7 operating, we can also use data from the
8 field to maximize project benefits and
9 reduce adverse effects while still
10 maintaining the project's objectives.

11 Restoring a deltaic process
12 that has been absent at this scale in
13 the Barataria Basin for approximately
14 100 years is expected to result in
15 significant changes to the ecosystem.
16 In addition to the benefits I've
17 discussed, some resources will
18 experience collateral injuries caused by
19 the diversion.

20 In recognition of these, the
21 Louisiana TIG is proposing a suite of
22 stewardship measures to help address the
23 effects on resources and communities.

24 One of the most visible and
25 most impacted resources will be

1 bottle-nose dolphins. Approximately
2 2,000 dolphins live in the Barataria
3 Basin. These dolphins are expected to
4 remain in the basin as salinities
5 decrease with diversion operation.
6 Exposure to low salinity water and other
7 stressors is expected to reduce the
8 annual survival rate for dolphins across
9 most of the basin.

10 The Louisiana TIG and CPRA have
11 developed a suite of measures in
12 anticipation of impacts to dolphins, and
13 to meet the requirements of legislation
14 that directed NOAA to issue a waiver,
15 under the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

16 The effects on dolphins will be
17 monitored beginning with baseline data
18 collection before operations. To help
19 support dolphin stocks across the state,
20 the Louisiana TIG will fund efforts to
21 reduce stressors, as well as continued
22 funding of the statewide Marine Mammal
23 Stranding Network. With data from
24 operations, CPRA will evaluate the
25 potential to modify operations to reduce

1 impacts to dolphins, while meeting
2 project objectives.

3 Lastly, funding will be set
4 aside, as a contingency, to support
5 response to potential unusual mortality
6 events, or UMEs, that could be declared,
7 based on dolphin deaths in the Barataria
8 Basin.

9 Some fishery resources of
10 commercial value will also be impacted.
11 Due to salinity changes in the basin,
12 brown shrimp and oyster populations will
13 be reduced and/or relocated. It's worth
14 noting that some changes to these
15 resources would continue to occur
16 without the project, as current trends
17 continued in the basin. But with the
18 project, these effects will be
19 accelerated.

20 Measures to address impacts to
21 oysters include establishment of new
22 public seed grounds, providing cultch
23 material for public and private growing
24 areas, enhancement of oyster brood stock
25 reefs, and assistance with implementing

1 off-bottom culture techniques.

2 For shrimp, efforts include
3 provisioning of vessel refrigeration to
4 improve catch quality and value, and
5 funding gear improvements to increase
6 efficiency.

7 For both fisheries, investments
8 will be made in training to improve
9 existing business or transition to new
10 careers, and funding of marketing to
11 improve value of catch.

12 Through other restoration
13 planning, the Louisiana TIG has already
14 committed \$26 million to oyster
15 restoration, including development and
16 operations of the oyster hatchery on
17 Grand Isle, development of a brood reef
18 program, and past and future placement
19 of cultch material on public seed
20 grounds.

21 Diverting water into the
22 Barataria Basin will increase water
23 levels and is expected to impact
24 communities outside of levee systems.
25 Subsidence and sea level rise are

1 predicted to increase flooding in most
2 of these areas to merely year round, by
3 2070, even without the diversion. But
4 diversion operations are anticipated to
5 result in more frequent inundation in
6 the near term.

7 For example, at Grand Bayou,
8 proposed project operations are
9 projected to increase the number of days
10 of flooding by 45 days per year in 2030,
11 but by only five days per year in 2050,
12 in comparison to the future without
13 project.

14 Because most homes outside the
15 levee systems are elevated, it's not
16 anticipated that operations will flood
17 structures, but will cause more frequent
18 inundation of roads, docks, and other
19 infrastructure, like sewage treatment
20 systems.

21 To address the impacts, the
22 project includes funding to raise homes,
23 roads, and improve community
24 infrastructure, and to address needs on
25 individual properties, such as docks and

1 septic systems.

2 CPRA is also proposing
3 voluntary easements in communities
4 outside of levee systems to compensate
5 owners for property impacts. CPRA is
6 open to discussion regarding fee
7 acquisition of property, if requested by
8 the landowner.

9 Lastly, data from operations
10 will be used to evaluate operational
11 regimes that limit impacts while meeting
12 project objectives.

13 This is an overview of the
14 process we've discussed today. From the
15 beginning of our work on the PDARP
16 through the release of this Draft
17 Phase II Restoration Plan.

18 Based on public input, we'll
19 release a final Restoration Plan that
20 will incorporate the feedback we get
21 from you during this public review
22 period.

23 In parallel with our Deepwater
24 Horizon restoration planning process,
25 the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has led

1 the development of a Draft Environmental
2 Impact Statement, or EIS, as part of
3 their permit process. You will learn
4 more about that in their presentation on
5 the draft EIS.

6 We want to hear from you. You
7 can submit comments on the Restoration
8 Plan through the web address, mailing
9 address, or phone number listed on this
10 slide. Unless specified otherwise, or
11 applicable to only one document, any
12 comment submitted will be considered in
13 the Louisiana TIG Restoration Plan and
14 the EIS, so you only need to submit your
15 comment once. Thank you for your time
16 and we look forward to hearing from you.

17 MR. LaBORDE:

18 Thank you, Brad and Mel. Now
19 that you are up to date on the project
20 details and the Draft Phase II
21 Restoration Plan, I'll explain the draft
22 EIS in more detail.

23 The Draft Environmental Impact
24 Statement for the proposed Mid-Barataria
25 Sediment Diversion project is

1 approximately 1600 pages. It is a very
2 large document with material that can
3 get technical, at times. Some of you
4 may read the draft EIS from cover to
5 cover, but most of you will have
6 interests in only a couple areas of the
7 document.

8 By going through what is
9 available to you in each chapter of the
10 draft EIS, I hope to make finding what
11 you wish to review a little bit easier.

12 First is the Table of Contents.
13 Use it as your guide to the draft EIS.
14 Each chapter is broken into sections,
15 and then more specific subsections, like
16 the example for Chapter 3, shown here.

17 Notice that the page numbers
18 begin with the chapter, three, in this
19 case, then the page number where the
20 topic begins. The Table of Contents
21 also includes the page numbers to all of
22 the tables and figures in the draft EIS.
23 It also includes the list of appendices.

24 Next is the Executive Summary.
25 The Executive Summary describes the

1 proposed action, lists the purpose and
2 need, along with the alternatives
3 analyzed in the draft EIS, and
4 summarizes the potential environmental
5 impacts. The Executive Summary is
6 intended to be a nontechnical and
7 condensed version of the draft EIS.

8 If you plan to comment or have
9 an interest in the proposed project, you
10 may want to begin your review with this
11 section of the draft EIS. Reading it
12 may give you all the information you
13 need, or it can help you flag chapters
14 and sections of the draft EIS you may
15 want to review in more detail.

16 Chapter 1 establishes the draft
17 EIS purpose and need. The purpose and
18 need statement is considered to be a
19 foundational piece of the document,
20 because it helps determine which
21 alternatives will be carried forward in
22 the EIS analysis.

23 As we have discussed, this
24 draft EIS serves many different
25 agencies. But for the Corps, the meat

1 of the purpose and needs statement is
2 underlined for you here.

3 You can also reference
4 Chapter 1 for, Project Background and
5 History, a summary of previous studies,
6 a list of Corps of Engineers' civil
7 works projects within the proposed
8 Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion project
9 area, EIS scope and relevant issues, and
10 a list of agency roles and
11 responsibilities.

12 Chapter 2 is where you will
13 find information about the alternatives
14 evaluated in the draft EIS. It explains
15 how the Corps, in coordination with the
16 TIG and cooperating agencies, developed
17 a screening criteria to evaluate a wide
18 range of alternatives, including coastal
19 restoration methods, project locations,
20 flow capacity, and operational triggers,
21 to arrive at the range of alternatives
22 shown here.

23 The draft EIS carries forward
24 six alternatives and the no-action
25 alternative for further analysis. The

1 six alternatives are all sediment
2 diversions at variable maximum flow
3 rates. A variable flow up to
4 75,000 cubic feet per second, which is
5 CPRA's or the applicant's preferred
6 alternative, a variable flow of up to
7 50,000 cubic feet per second, and a
8 variable flow of up to 150,000 cubic
9 feet per second.

10 Marsh terracing in the outfall
11 area was an alternative considered for
12 each flow capacity. I included a marsh
13 terracing example over to the side for
14 you, but, in general, they are designed
15 to be little sediment catchers.

16 Chapter 2 also includes a
17 comparative summary of all the potential
18 impacts for each alternative. If you
19 are a casual reviewer, after the
20 Executive Summary, this table,
21 Table 2.9-1 will help you understand the
22 construction and operational impact
23 determinations for each alternative
24 listed here.

25 The Affected Environment

1 chapter gives a description of the
2 existing conditions and trends in the
3 project area, which may be affected by
4 each alternative. It establishes a
5 baseline that we can then use to
6 evaluate impacts in Chapter 4, the
7 Environmental Consequences chapter.

8 Chapters 3 and 4 are broken
9 down into 22 distinct resource areas, as
10 listed here. The Environmental
11 Consequences chapter is perhaps the most
12 important chapter of the draft EIS
13 because it explains the potential
14 positive and negative impacts for each
15 Sediment Diversion alternative in
16 comparison to the trends and conditions
17 from Chapter 3.

18 Chapter 4 is where you would go
19 if you want a more technical explanation
20 of the proposed project's direct,
21 indirect and cumulative impacts during
22 construction and operation. In the
23 draft EIS, construction impacts are
24 considered over a five-year time frame.
25 The operational impacts spanned over a

1 50-year projection.

2 Impacts are assessed for both
3 context and intensity. Context helps
4 you understand the duration of an impact
5 and uses terms like "temporary,"
6 "short-term," "long-term," and
7 "permanent."

8 Intensity helps you understand
9 the severity of an impact and uses terms
10 like "no impact" and "negligible,"
11 "minor," "moderate," or "major" impacts.

12 For each resource, the context
13 and intensity is defined, followed by
14 the analysis of each alternative in
15 comparison to the no action. Each
16 section ends with the impact
17 determination.

18 In addition to impacts,
19 Chapter 4 includes a mitigation summary
20 outlining CPRA's proposed avoidance,
21 minimization and mitigation measures.

22 By now, you've heard a lot
23 about the Corps permit decision and the
24 TIG funding decision, but there are a
25 number of other laws and policies the

1 draft EIS will inform. Some examples
2 include the Endangered Species Act, Fish
3 and Wildlife Coordination Act, and the
4 National Historic Preservation Act.

5 Chapter 5 summarizes the means
6 of compliance with all statutes, orders
7 and policies.

8 Chapter 6 lists the names and
9 qualifications of the individuals
10 primarily responsible for writing the
11 draft EIS.

12 Chapter 7 discusses the past,
13 ongoing and future public involvement
14 opportunities associated with this
15 review.

16 Also, the draft EIS is littered
17 with acronyms. Chapter 8 has a list of
18 all of them, in alphabetical order, for
19 your reference.

20 And Chapter 9 is the index,
21 which gives page numbers where key words
22 and topics can be found throughout the
23 draft EIS.

24 I like to think of Chapter 10
25 and the appendices as our way of showing

1 our work. Chapter 10 gives a reference
2 list of all the best available science
3 and literature used to help with the
4 analysis in drafting of the EIS.

5 The appendices are
6 approximately 6,000 pages of 20
7 technical reports, studies and analyses
8 that was considered when drafting the
9 EIS. The modeling and technical reports
10 that I mentioned today, earlier, by
11 CPRA, can be found in this part of the
12 document.

13 Before I wrap up, I want to
14 remind you that the draft EIS for the
15 proposed Mid-Barataria Sediment
16 Diversion Project is a large document
17 that can be technical. It is available
18 for the casual reviewer with the
19 Executive Summary, Comparative Summary
20 of Alternatives Table, and the Table of
21 Contents to help you find areas in the
22 draft EIS of your interest. From there,
23 it ranges in complexity, as you read
24 through the draft EIS chapters, ending
25 with Chapter 10 and the appendices, for

1 those who really want to dig deep into
2 the analysis.

3 In conclusion, I want to thank
4 you for your participation and remind
5 you that your comments play an important
6 role in our process. So please send us
7 your feedback by May 4th, 2021 by either
8 the comment portal we discussed earlier,
9 by traditional mail, to the Corps of
10 Engineers, and if you prefer to provide
11 oral comments, please leave a message at
12 866-211-9205. Thank you.

13 MR. FRANKLIN:

14 Thank you to all the speakers
15 who recorded those presentations. If
16 you would like to watch the videos
17 again, they are available on the U.S.
18 Army Corps of Engineers website at the
19 link that is now being circulated in the
20 webinar chat.

21 Now we're going to start the
22 public comment portion of this morning's
23 meeting. When you registered for the
24 webinar, we asked if you wanted to make
25 a comment during the meeting. At this

1 time, we currently have eight people
2 signed up to give comment. We will keep
3 the webinar running for public comment
4 for the next two hours or so. If you
5 did not sign up to speak, but would like
6 to do so, please simply type your name
7 into the questions box.

8 And, again, if you did not sign
9 up to give public comment and you would
10 like to do so, just simply type your
11 name into the questions box and we will
12 be able to call upon you.

13 I'll pause at this time to give
14 our interpreters a chance to give
15 instructions in Spanish, Vietnamese and
16 Khmer. Ms. Soto.

17 MS. SOTO:

18 Thank you. (Spanish
19 translation). Gracias.

20 MR. FRANKLIN:

21 Thank you. Mr. Nguyen.

22 MR. NGUYEN:

23 (Vietnamese translation).

24 Thank you.

25 MR. FRANKLIN:

1 Thank you. Mr. Te.

2 MR. TE:

3 (Khmer translation). Thank
4 you.

5 MR. FRANKLIN:

6 Thank you, translators. At
7 this time I'd like to remind you that
8 representatives of the U.S. Army Corps
9 of Engineers, CPRA, and NOAA, and other
10 Louisiana Trustee Implementation Group
11 members, including the U.S. Department
12 of The Interior and the U.S.
13 Environmental Protection Agency, and the
14 U.S. Department of Agriculture are on
15 the webinar to listen to your public
16 comments. The representatives will
17 listen to your comment; however, panel
18 members may provide clarifications and
19 information.

20 As a reminder, all attendees
21 are muted automatically. We will unmute
22 you when it is your turn to speak.
23 Also, if you are viewing the webinar and
24 have called in using a phone and are
25 planning to speak, you must enter your

1 individual audio PIN, and please enter
2 with a # sign on the front of the PIN
3 and a # sign on the back of the PIN.
4 Note that this PIN is different than the
5 access code. Please, also, follow any
6 notifications to unmute yourself.

7 As shown on the slide, if you
8 are using the phone, please make sure
9 your "computer's audio" is not selected.

10 We will call the first person's
11 name, and at the same time, the name of
12 the next person in line, so that you
13 will have a little bit more time to
14 prepare.

15 When we call your name, we will
16 unmute your line and you will have three
17 minutes to speak. I thank you, in
18 advance, for respecting the three-minute
19 rule.

20 Please state your name, and if
21 you're representing an organization,
22 please state the name of the
23 organization prior to making your
24 comments.

25 At this time, to get started,

1 our first speaker is George Ricks,
2 followed by Jason Smith. Please
3 proceed, Mr. Ricks, with your comment.

4 MR. GEORGE RICKS:

5 Thank you, sir. This is
6 Captain George Ricks. I'm President of
7 the Save Louisiana Coalition. Firstly,
8 I'd like to say, the least
9 environmentally damaging alternative to
10 this project, pipeline sediment
11 delivery, or dredging, was not used in
12 this EIS.

13 Under Section EIS-2, proposed
14 need of this project, the EIS states,
15 "This proposed project is needed to help
16 restore habitat and ecosystems services
17 injured in the northern Gulf of Mexico
18 as a result of the Deepwater Horizon oil
19 spill."

20 This project, given the
21 permanent adverse impacts to fisheries,
22 marine mammals and water quality, is in
23 total contradiction of this purpose and
24 need.

25 Under mitigation, the total of

1 \$305 million for mitigation to seafood
2 industries and dolphins is ridiculously
3 low.

4 I would like to point out, the
5 120-day Spillway opening in 2019, which
6 caused the declared fisheries disaster
7 of \$58 million was a one-time event.
8 This disaster was caused by the same
9 river water that this project is
10 designed to put into the estuary.

11 Given the permanent adverse
12 impacts and collateral injuries of this
13 project, the few long-term benefits do
14 not justify the costs of construction,
15 nor the economic loss to the fisheries,
16 low-income families, and flooding of
17 coastal communities affected.

18 The Save Louisiana Coalition
19 recommends this permit application be
20 rejected. Thank you.

21 MR. FRANKLIN:

22 Thank you, Mr. Ricks.

23 MR. LaBORDE:

24 Thanks, Captain Ricks. I'm
25 making sure my microphone's working

1 here, and it appears that it is. Your
2 comments are technical in nature, as to
3 be expected with your experience in the
4 Basin. It's certainly something that we
5 can take into consideration for the
6 final EIS. Thanks.

7 MR. FRANKLIN:

8 Thank you for your comment.
9 The next individual to speak will be
10 Jason Smith, followed by John Troutman.
11 Mr. Smith, please make your comment.

12 (ZOOM technical difficulties).

13 MR. FRANKLIN:

14 If you're having difficulty
15 with the audio, please remember to put a
16 # sign in front of the PIN and then a
17 # sign again.

18 (ZOOM technical difficulties).

19 MR. FRANKLIN:

20 You may be also self-muted,
21 Mr. Smith, if you will unmute yourself,
22 as we are not hearing you.

23 We'll come back to Mr. Smith
24 and we'll proceed with Mr. John
25 Troutman. Mr. Troutman, please proceed.

1 (ZOOM technical difficulties).

2 MR. FRANKLIN:

3 Please proceed, Mr. Troutman.

4 You're up now.

5 (ZOOM technical difficulties).

6 MR. FRANKLIN:

7 And if you'll unmute yourself.

8 If Mr. Smith and Mr. Troutman -- Are you

9 there?

10 MR. JOHN TROUTMAN:

11 This is John Troutman. Can you

12 hear me?

13 MR. FRANKLIN:

14 Yes, sir. Please go ahead, and

15 state your name, for the record, and if

16 you're representing an organization, the

17 name of the organization, and you have

18 three minutes. Please proceed.

19 MR. JOHN TROUTMAN:

20 Yes, this is John Troutman. I

21 am with CPRA, and I did not

22 intentionally ask to speak, so somehow I

23 got there. Sorry.

24 MR. FRANKLIN:

25 Thank you. Mr. Smith, you may

1 have to go on your computer audio, and
2 you still may be self-muted.

3 (ZOOM technical difficulties).

4 MR. FRANKLIN:

5 Let's go to our next individual
6 to give comment, and that will be Mr.
7 Robert Gardiner, followed by Scott
8 McGary. Robert Gardiner.

9 (ZOOM technical difficulties).

10 MR. FRANKLIN:

11 If you are self-muted, if you
12 would just simply unmute yourself, hit
13 the little microphone symbol and unmute
14 yourself. Robert Gardiner. You can go
15 ahead and proceed, Mr. Gardiner. You
16 are now unmuted.

17 (ZOOM technical difficulties).

18 MR. FRANKLIN:

19 So let me just go back, while
20 these individuals are working through
21 their audio issues. As a reminder,
22 everyone is automatically muted, and we
23 will unmute you when it is your turn to
24 speak. Also, if you are viewing the
25 webinar and have called in using a phone

1 and are planning to speak, you must
2 enter your individual audio PIN number,
3 and to do that, you'll need to put in a
4 # sign, the audio PIN, and then a # sign
5 again, and then you'll be brought live
6 into the queue.

7 So let's see if we have any
8 individuals who are able to do that.
9 Mr. Robert Gardiner, are you with us?
10 Next, we'll go to Scott McGary.

11 (ZOOM technical difficulties).

12 MR. FRANKLIN:

13 Okay, it sounds like you have
14 both the phone and the computer audio
15 on. Mr. McGary.

16 (ZOOM technical difficulties).

17 MR. FRANKLIN:

18 Mr. Robert Gardiner, were you
19 able to connect?

20 (ZOOM technical difficulties).

21 MR. FRANKLIN:

22 Mr. Scott McGary, you're next
23 in the queue, Scott McGary, to give
24 public comment.

25 (ZOOM technical difficulties).

1 MR. FRANKLIN:

2 We think Mr. McGary is with his
3 dog at this moment and we'll give him a
4 second.

5 Okay. Let's move on. Go
6 ahead. Ms. Rosa Dusang, if you can
7 prepare yourself, you're next in the
8 queue. Rosa Dusang.

9 (ZOOM technical difficulties).

10 MR. FRANKLIN:

11 Okay. We have a team reaching
12 out to these individuals, and we'll just
13 give them a moment to see if we can't
14 get them connected.

15 Okay. So at this time it looks
16 like we're going to reach out to these
17 individuals and get them queued
18 properly, and at this moment, we're
19 going to go to a break, and we'll
20 continue to monitor the queue and get
21 individuals connected properly. And,
22 please, if you are listening, stay
23 tuned, stay online, and we're going to
24 go to a momentary break to give these
25 individuals an opportunity to get

1 connected properly. Thank you so very
2 much.

3 (Break taken).

4 MR. FRANKLIN:

5 Okay, ladies and gentlemen, I
6 think we've got a couple of our
7 commenters back online. Let's go ahead
8 and give our listening panel a moment to
9 get back up. And we thank you for your
10 patience.

11 And, again, if you are
12 listening to this webinar and you would
13 like to give public comment, just simply
14 type your name into the questions box
15 and we will get you into the speaking
16 queue, and a person will reach out to
17 you to give you personal instructions of
18 how to best connect.

19 Let's go back to Jason Smith.
20 Mr. Smith, you have three minutes to
21 give your public comment, and if you're
22 representing an organization, please
23 state the name of your organization.
24 Jason Smith, please proceed.

25 (ZOOM technical difficulties).

1 MR. FRANKLIN:

2 And Scott McGary, I think we
3 also have you in the queue. So,
4 Mr. McGary, if you can hear my voice,
5 please unmute yourself and proceed as
6 well.

7 (ZOOM technical difficulties).

8 MR. FRANKLIN:

9 It appears, Mr. Smith, you are
10 self-muted. Okay. Let's toggle back to
11 Mr. Scott McGary. You can go ahead and
12 proceed.

13 (ZOOM technical difficulties).

14 MR. FRANKLIN:

15 Let's proceed with Mr. Robert
16 Gardiner. You are next in the queue.

17 MR. ROBERT GARDINER:

18 Can you hear me now?

19 MR. FRANKLIN:

20 I can hear you, Mr. Gardiner.
21 Sounds like you're having audio issues,
22 so if you could mute one of those.
23 Okay. If you're speaking, Mr. Gardiner,
24 we cannot hear you. Go ahead and
25 self-unmute yourself.

1 MR. ROBERT GARDINER:

2 Can you hear me now?

3 MR. FRANKLIN:

4 We can. There's an echo, but
5 we can hear you.

6 MR. ROBERT GARDINER:

7 Can you hear me now?

8 MR. FRANKLIN:

9 We can. Please proceed with
10 your name, and if you're representing an
11 organization, state the name of your
12 organization and your public comment.

13 MR. LaBORDE:

14 And if that gentleman is on the
15 phone, he may need to mute his computer
16 speakers.

17 MR. FRANKLIN:

18 And just to remind everyone, we
19 are here for a block of time, and so
20 we're going to get this worked out with
21 these individuals. We have individuals
22 who are contacting these individuals to
23 try to get their audio connection
24 configured correctly.

25 And I think, Mr. Gardiner,

1 you're both on your computer audio and
2 phone audio. If you'll just drop one of
3 those, then we can hear you.

4 And we think he's calling back
5 in right now. At one point there were
6 three connections. And Mr. Scott McGary
7 or Jason Smith, if you're still with us,
8 we would love to hear your comment as
9 well.

10 (ZOOM technical difficulties).

11 MR. FRANKLIN:

12 So it appears we have many
13 individuals online, but not many have
14 indicated that they would like to give
15 public comment. And, again, that's the
16 portion of the meeting that we're at at
17 this moment.

18 We've concluded the
19 presentation, and this is when, if you
20 would like to give a public comment, you
21 can go and type your name into the
22 questions box and then we will reach out
23 to you to give you further instruction
24 of how to give your comment.

25 We will unmute you when it is

1 your turn to speak. Also, if you're
2 viewing the webinar and have called in
3 using a phone and are planning to speak,
4 you must enter your individual audio PIN
5 number. It's a five-digit number, but
6 you need to put in the # sign first, the
7 five-digit PIN number, and then the
8 # sign again.

9 And if you've self-muted
10 yourself, when it is your turn, you'll
11 need to unmute yourself, on your end.

12 And, Mr. McGary, we think that
13 you are self-muted. Ms. Shannon Loup,
14 please proceed. Shannon Loup.

15 MS. SHANNON LOUP:

16 Hi, can you hear me?

17 MR. FRANKLIN:

18 I can.

19 MS. SHANNON LOUP:

20 Hi. I am on the Wilkinson
21 Canal in Myrtle Grove, and I guess my
22 concern is what's going to happen with
23 the water in Myrtle Grove Estates when
24 this or if this happens and what are the
25 plans for that. I'm under the

1 impression that they are talking about
2 possibly raising bulkheads or buying out
3 the people in the community and that
4 actually frightens me. Am I going to
5 get an answer?

6 MR. LaBORDE:

7 Yes, thank you for your
8 comment. I think we did address that in
9 the EIS, so give us a second here.
10 We'll find that information in the
11 document for you and direct you, as
12 well, to the rest of the folks on the
13 line, where to find that information.
14 Thanks.

15 MR. FRANKLIN:

16 Thank you, Ms. Loup. And
17 Mr. LaBorde will loop back with more
18 information on your comment.

19 Again, other individuals who
20 are in the queue at this time are Jason
21 Smith, Scott McGary, Robert Gardiner.

22 MR. LaBORDE:

23 And, Perry, I have a note here
24 that Jason Smith declined to comment.
25 That was an error in the registration.

1 MR. FRANKLIN:

2 Thank you very much. So while
3 we're waiting for individuals to submit
4 their name into the questions box if
5 they would like to give a public
6 comment, again, there was a presentation
7 that those of you who are just joining
8 us missed that presentation, and that
9 presentation will be posted in several
10 locations, and we'll give you that
11 information before we sign off. And so
12 we want everyone to be aware of the
13 presentation that was given earlier.

14 MR. LaBORDE:

15 So things do seem busy on our
16 end. We do have some material coming
17 through on the chat, aside from some of
18 our technical issues here. I can go
19 ahead and go through some of those
20 comments and provide some responses
21 there.

22 Let's see. Let's start from
23 the top. And this is going back to when
24 we were going through the prerecorded
25 presentations.

1 Can the webinar be played back
2 for someone who is unavailable to
3 attend? The answer to that is yes. All
4 of these meetings will be recorded.
5 We'll also have transcripts available
6 shortly after these meetings wrap up,
7 and we'll have that available on the
8 Corps webpage. So that is one way
9 people can watch the meetings that were
10 unable to participate either today,
11 tomorrow or Thursday evening.

12 There was a question about the
13 prerecorded audio being played earlier.
14 Yes, that was prerecorded. All three
15 presentations by myself, Mel Landry,
16 with NOAA and the TIG, as well as Brad
17 Barth at CPRA. Those presentations are
18 available as well on the Corps
19 Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion
20 webpage.

21 There was a question during the
22 prerecorded presentations, if folks from
23 the Corps, CPRA and the TIG were
24 listening in. And indeed, we were. We
25 were all here, and that's some feedback,

1 maybe for the next meetings, we'll make
2 ourselves -- we'll present ourselves a
3 little sooner so that folks who
4 participate know that we're here.

5 There was a question about
6 wording, "restore elements injured"
7 versus "restore injuries." That's
8 something that we'll take into
9 consideration.

10 There was an additional comment
11 about the timing of diversion operation
12 with larval recruitment, and that's
13 something that we did look into as part
14 of our review. That's available in
15 Section -- or Chapter 4, Section 10, or
16 4.10. That would be the Aquatic
17 Resources section. And then 4.25, which
18 is the Cumulative Impacts section.

19 We had a question about
20 languages and translations. We do have
21 the Executive Summary available in
22 Vietnamese and Spanish. We published
23 our first Public Notice, which had a
24 list of where the libraries are here in
25 south Louisiana where those Executive

1 Summaries in the different languages are
2 available. So that's also on our
3 webpage for review.

4 There's a lot of frustration
5 here about the sound issues, and look, I
6 understand. You know, we're doing what
7 we can on our end to straighten those
8 issues up. We do have other ways that
9 you can provide comments, which we
10 talked about in the presentation. We
11 have mail. We have the commenting
12 portal. We have the toll-free number.
13 And, you know, if you did plan to
14 comment today and you've run into
15 trouble, those are ways to comment.
16 Those comments will be reviewed by us
17 and they'll have equal weight, so
18 there's no difference in the way that
19 people plan to comment.

20 There was another chat question
21 about narrowing passes down at the
22 southernmost portions of the Barataria
23 Basin. That was not an alternative that
24 we had considered for this EIS. That is
25 something that we've, here in

1 regulatory, had questions and maybe some
2 applications for in the past; however,
3 none of those projects have been
4 advanced, to my knowledge.

5 Let's see. I'm still going
6 down the list here. We had a chat
7 comment from Ms. Cornish, from the
8 Marine Mammal Commission, that shows
9 that they do plan to submit written
10 comments, which, again, we appreciate.

11 And there's a request for an
12 extension. Those of you out there that
13 are looking for an extension of time,
14 please make that part of your comments.
15 Once you submit those comments, we have
16 folks monitoring them realtime, so we'll
17 receive those and take that extension
18 request into consideration.

19 Let's see. We had an
20 additional comment here about water
21 quality, nitrogen and phosphorus, with
22 respects to hypoxia which is experienced
23 in the Gulf of Mexico.

24 There's a question about
25 whether -- what the impacts to that

1 might be, and that is something that we
2 can consider for our review of the -- in
3 drafting of the final EIS.

4 Are we planning to build
5 islands in Barataria Bay to slow tidal
6 water down? That was not a specific
7 alternative that we reviewed; however,
8 we did look at building terraces in the
9 Basin, as I mentioned in the
10 presentation, to serve as sediment
11 catchers and to slow down some of the
12 flows, so it is something that we
13 considered further.

14 We have a couple more. I can
15 stop there and see if we have people
16 queued up for a comment, from there,
17 Perry.

18 MR. FRANKLIN:

19 Thank you, Mr. LaBorde. And
20 while this slide is up, let me just
21 remind everyone, as Mr. LaBorde
22 mentioned, that there's several ways to
23 submit your public comment on the draft
24 EIS, or NRDA RP, and all of these will
25 have equal weight, as he mentioned.

1 The comment period ends on
2 May 4th, 2021, and you can submit them
3 electronically with that top URL. You
4 can submit them written, via U.S. Mail,
5 or you can call in, 866-211-9205, and
6 give an oral comment via that toll-free
7 number, and you'll be given four minutes
8 to do so.

9 We do have a few individuals
10 who are in the queue at this time.
11 Let's go with Dina Eppley, followed by
12 Amanda Moore.

13 MS. DINA EPPLEY:

14 Hi, this is Dina Eppley. Can
15 you hear me?

16 MR. FRANKLIN:

17 We can, Dina. Thank you.

18 MS. DINA EPPLEY:

19 Okay.

20 MR. FRANKLIN:

21 If you are representing an
22 organization, please state the name of
23 the organization.

24 MS. DINA EPPLEY:

25 I am not representing an

1 organization, but I am a homeowner in
2 one of the communities that are going to
3 be impacted by this, and I mostly had
4 some questions, and hopefully this is an
5 appropriate forum to ask the questions.
6 I put a couple of them in the chat box.

7 But the first one was I just
8 wanted to understand what we meant by
9 "Sustain 20 percent of the land."
10 That's unclear to me. Does that mean
11 we're going -- this diversion project is
12 going to allow us to keep 20 percent of
13 the land we have now? Are we adding
14 20 percent of the land? And if we're
15 adding, what is that based on? Today's
16 levels or future levels? What does that
17 mean?

18 MR. LaBORDE:

19 Thank you. We'll try to get
20 some clarity on that, as well as update
21 the group that's on the line today where
22 that information might be available in
23 the EIS.

24 MR. FRANKLIN:

25 Okay. So we're going to --

1 they'll get you the information,
2 Ms. Eppley. The team is looking through
3 the information at this moment. Does
4 that conclude your comment, Ms. Eppley?

5 (No response).

6 MR. FRANKLIN:

7 Okay. The next individual to
8 give public comment is Amanda Moore.
9 Please proceed.

10 MS. AMANDA MOORE:

11 Can you hear me?

12 MR. FRANKLIN:

13 We do.

14 MS. AMANDA MOORE:

15 Excellent. My name is Amanda
16 Moore. I'm with the National Wildlife
17 Federation and also with Restore the
18 Mississippi River Delta Campaign. We
19 appreciate all of the work that has gone
20 into this draft EIS and restoration
21 plan, and we want to acknowledge that
22 the Barataria Basin is losing land at
23 one of the most rapid rates in the
24 world, and was also Ground Zero for the
25 BP oil spill.

1 So losing this marsh means that
2 we're losing fish and wildlife that
3 depend on that habitat, and in addition,
4 we'll be losing the storm surge
5 protection that the marsh provides.

6 The power of the river allows
7 us to harness more land-building
8 potential than we could get with dredges
9 at a fraction of the cost, and the
10 benefits are long-lasting, even in the
11 face of sea level rise and hurricanes.

12 This project is innovative and
13 widely studied, and this project concept
14 is our best shot at a vibrant and
15 resilient future for fish, wildlife and
16 communities in the Mississippi River
17 delta.

18 The Mid-Barataria Sediment
19 Diversion is going to have major
20 beneficial impacts. The land building
21 that the project will provide compared
22 to a future without action, and we also
23 want to acknowledge that the sediment
24 introduced by the diversion will not
25 only build wetlands, but it will also

1 increase the elevation across a hundred
2 square miles in the Barataria Basin, and
3 this will create more complex habitat
4 that's favored by some fish and
5 wildlife, and it will also help reduce
6 the storm surge threats to nearby
7 communities. We feel that's a really
8 important benefit of the project.

9 In short, we feel the project
10 is essential to a sustainable and more
11 resilient future in the delta, and we
12 want to thank you, again, and we're
13 going to be submitting more detailed
14 comments before the comment period
15 closes.

16 MR. LaBORDE:

17 Great. Thanks for your
18 feedback, and yes, to update the group,
19 I mean, if you comment today, feel free
20 to comment multiple times. As you're
21 going through this document, you may
22 comment on something and then come
23 across something additional that you may
24 want to provide feedback on, so that's
25 certainly okay with us and appreciated.

1 Thanks.

2 MR. FRANKLIN:

3 Thank you, Ms. Moore. We will
4 have Ms. Mary Tucker next, and then
5 Ms. Dina Eppley, we will come back to
6 you. So next up is Mary Tucker.

7 MS. MARY TUCKER:

8 Good morning. My name is Mary
9 Tucker and I am a resident in Myrtle
10 Grove. I am not representing the
11 subdivision or the board. I am simply
12 representing myself and my family.

13 And while I appreciate the
14 comments from the previous lady, with
15 the Wildlife and Fisheries, I
16 respectfully disagree. It's a great
17 idea to build the marsh until it's not,
18 and yes, there are some benefits for
19 some. However, to the people of Myrtle
20 Grove, we have identified and I think
21 everybody knows there is a problem that,
22 more days than not, we will probably
23 have water on the road.

24 In some of the previous
25 meetings I've been at, it was stated

1 that, you know, it should not be that
2 detrimental because these houses are
3 raised and most of them are camps.
4 However, these really aren't camps.
5 These are people's homes. Most of them
6 are half-a-million-dollar homes that
7 people have invested their life savings
8 and work into.

9 We bought in this community
10 because we were -- I wanted my kids to
11 be able to ride their bikes on the
12 streets, to play kickball in the lots.
13 We wanted to fish off of our docks, and
14 if the water continuously comes up when
15 the diversion is operating, it's going
16 to ruin the streets.

17 Yes, if you raise
18 infrastructure, i.e., the streets, I can
19 access my property. However, my house
20 was totally built to code; when I would
21 get out of my car, I'd probably have
22 water around my ankles.

23 I do know that there is money
24 to mitigate certain subdivisions. We
25 still want clarity on how much money is

1 available. I think the last meeting I
2 listened to, it said 300 million.
3 That's not just for Myrtle Grove.
4 That's Myrtle Grove, that's Suzie Bayou,
5 Happy Jack, Woodpark, and I think a few
6 others.

7 They talked about buy-outs,
8 which would not be my first choice. A
9 question is, how do they determine fair
10 market value? So there are a lot of
11 unknowns, and I guess I could say I'm
12 against the diversion, and I would like
13 some answers, please.

14 MR. LaBORDE:

15 Thanks, Ms. Tucker.

16 MS. MARY TUCKER:

17 Thank you.

18 MR. LaBORDE:

19 That's a good comment, and, you
20 know, thanks for expressing your
21 concerns. We had a comment about Myrtle
22 Grove earlier as well.

23 So just to let the group know,
24 the impacts that you're referencing are
25 discussed in Section 4.20. That's the

1 Public Health and Safety section. We
2 also discuss it in Section 4.13, which
3 is Socioeconomics. And we also have
4 some additional information in
5 Section 4.27 with respect to mitigation
6 for these impacts.

7 We will take those comments
8 that you've made today into
9 consideration. If you do check out
10 those sections of the EIS, or if you
11 haven't already, and you have some
12 additional feedback you'd like to
13 provide to us, we'd certainly appreciate
14 that, either using the phone number that
15 we talked about earlier, the comment
16 portal -- there's another one.

17 MR. FRANKLIN:

18 U.S. Mail.

19 MR. LaBORDE:

20 Thank you, snail mail. Yeah,
21 that's it for me, Perry. Thanks.

22 MR. FRANKLIN:

23 Okay. Thank you very much,
24 Ms. Tucker. We're going to go back to
25 Ms. Dina Eppley.

1 Okay. Looks like she's dropped
2 off. Let's proceed with Steve Pollock.
3 Mr. Pollock, are you on? I think you
4 are self-muted. If you will unmute
5 yourself.

6 (ZOOM technical difficulties).

7 MR. FRANKLIN:

8 You should be able to speak,
9 Mr. Steve Pollock. Okay. While
10 Mr. Pollock is getting his audio levels
11 together, Ms. Tucker, I think you have
12 an additional comment you'd like to
13 offer? Ms. Mary Tucker.

14 MS. MARY TUCKER:

15 Hi. Thanks for letting me ask
16 another question. I have read over, of
17 course, not all 6,000 documents, and it
18 might not be 6,000 pages, but I have
19 looked in the sections that were just
20 referenced, I think, by Mr. Brad, but I
21 could not find -- and maybe these are
22 one-off questions -- specific answers.
23 They were broad strokes, and maybe we're
24 not to that point yet, but how things
25 are determined, fair market value, how

1 that is determined, house raising. Who
2 determines how high they would raise,
3 you know, structures if they choose to
4 go that route? And I'm not trying to
5 belabor the issue.

6 MR. LaBORDE:

7 No, I understand that. And for
8 some of these more specific details, we
9 might need to go back and investigate
10 that further for the final EIS and
11 provide a more thorough response, one
12 way or the other.

13 MR. FRANKLIN:

14 Very good. Thank you. Steve
15 Pollock, can you hear us? If you can,
16 you're now in the queue to proceed.

17 MR. STEVE POLLOCK:

18 All right, sir. Can you hear
19 me?

20 MR. FRANKLIN:

21 We can.

22 MR. STEVE POLLOCK:

23 All right, let me prop this up
24 here. So my name is Dr. Steve Pollock
25 of Triple N Oysters. I've been in the

1 oyster industry in the state of
2 Louisiana for six years now. I'm
3 originally from Montreal, Canada, so I'm
4 a bit of an oddball down here.

5 But in looking over the EIS,
6 I'm extremely worried about the short
7 and long-term consequences of the
8 planned Mid-Barataria Diversion.

9 On the one hand, the EIS seems
10 to support the idea that environmental
11 damage will be immediate, long-lasting
12 and severe for the state of Louisiana.
13 Yet, turns the other side of the card
14 over and says that it looks like it's
15 probably going to be beneficial in the
16 next 50 years.

17 The EIS does not clearly show
18 that the benefits will outweigh the
19 costs of going through with this
20 project, and in my opinion, other
21 alternatives should be seriously
22 considered to minimize the severe
23 impacts to Louisiana fisheries, the
24 communities, and the entire Gulf Coast
25 ecosystems by opening up the diversion

1 in the Mid-Barataria region. That's my
2 comment. Thank you, sir.

3 MR. LaBORDE:

4 Thank you for your comment,
5 Mr. Pollock.

6 MR. FRANKLIN:

7 Okay. We're going to go ahead
8 and just pause for a moment to see if
9 others will go into the queue and to put
10 their names into the questions box, and
11 so we have well over 100 individuals who
12 are participating at this moment, and so
13 at this moment we are waiting for
14 additional public commenters, and to do
15 that, simply type your name into the
16 questions box, and then we can give you
17 the instructions that you need in order
18 to make your comment at this webinar.

19 And so we'll just give a few
20 moments here to allow individuals to do
21 that. And, Mr. LaBorde, if you have any
22 other clarifications at this moment, we
23 do not have any other speakers in the
24 queue.

25 MR. LaBORDE:

1 Okay. So I can pick up where I
2 left off with respect to the information
3 that we're getting via the chat.

4 There's a question about not
5 having a comment, but having a specific
6 question. Yes, that is something that's
7 allowed, but I think our intention here
8 today is just to get the full amount of
9 public feedback that we can receive, and
10 our responses would be more generalized
11 to direct you to the location where that
12 information may be available to you in
13 the EIS or the NRDA Restoration Plan.

14 Certainly, if there's a
15 question that we feel like can't be
16 answered with that, then that would be
17 something that we'd have to
18 further consider for the file.

19 There's a question about if the
20 diversion does build land and closes off
21 main bayous, will those bayous then be
22 dredged. The answer is yes and no.
23 There may be some waterways that are
24 maintained, but, in general, it's
25 probably less likely.

1 There is more information that
2 can be found on that in our mitigation
3 section. So, again, that's going to be
4 Chapter 4, Section 27, 4.27, and that
5 will cover the CPRA proposed plan for
6 impacts to navigation channels.

7 There's a comment from
8 Ms. Morris that, again, is requesting a
9 time extension. Again, with folks who
10 plan on commenting, please make those
11 requests known to us and we'll consider
12 those as we receive them.

13 There is a complaint about
14 diversity on the panel and there being
15 some disappointment there. I get that.
16 I've brought it up in some of our prior
17 meetings. I think some of what we've
18 tried to do is limit the amount of
19 people that you're seeing on the panel,
20 and as a result, some people got dropped
21 off.

22 I would suggest that you look
23 at the list of preparers. We do have,
24 you know, great men and women that are
25 on this team, and it's something that we

1 can consider for the second and third
2 meetings here with respect to diversity.
3 So I appreciate that comment.

4 Will the diversion flow
5 constantly or be opened at certain
6 times? So I believe it was in Brad
7 Barth's presentation, but there is a
8 proposed at this time base flow of
9 5,000 cfs. And beyond that, it would
10 depend on river flows.

11 So there is some additional
12 information that can be found there in
13 the alternatives section for each one of
14 the diversions that we have considered
15 throughout the EIS.

16 There's some more concern about
17 Myrtle Grove. That's understandable.
18 Again, to reiterate, the impacts are
19 discussed in Section 4.20. That's the
20 Public Health and Safety, as well as
21 4.13, which is Socioeconomics.

22 Here's some concern about the
23 long and short-term consequences, and
24 this may tie into Mr. Pollock's live
25 comment, which I believe we addressed,

1 with there being -- or not addressed,
2 but we'll take into consideration.

3 MR. FRANKLIN:

4 Looks like we have an
5 individual to give public comment.

6 MR. LaBORDE:

7 Okay.

8 MR. FRANKLIN:

9 All right. So let's proceed
10 with John Tesvich, with the oyster
11 industry participants. Please proceed.

12 MR. JOHN TESVICH:

13 Hello. Can you hear me?

14 MR. FRANKLIN:

15 We do. Please proceed. State
16 your name for the record, sir.

17 MR. JOHN TESVICH:

18 Yes. This is John Tesvich, and
19 I'm on the Louisiana Oyster Task Force,
20 and I'd just like to just add a couple
21 of things to the conversation, listening
22 to the presentation.

23 One thing is on alternatives
24 that were considered. I was
25 disappointed that some real alternatives

1 weren't part of that instead of just
2 looking at no action and various levels
3 of flow.

4 There are things that have been
5 suggested across many public hearings.
6 One is colmates. It's colmata. It's
7 actually levying the outflow of the
8 diversion to take a part of Barataria
9 Bay at a time and rebuild that part
10 without affecting the larger area of the
11 basin, instead of allowing the water
12 just to go throughout the basin,
13 depending on the wind and currents.
14 Colmates will take one section and will
15 build one section at a time.

16 That is an alternative that
17 would severely reduce the flooding, the
18 indirect impacts to the seafood
19 industry, so, you know, it has not been
20 given, I feel, a serious consideration.

21 The other thing is that the
22 mitigations, the numbers that I saw you
23 put up there about the oysters and
24 shrimp, brown shrimp and dolphin, they
25 are way, way off. You're off by an

1 order of magnitude. 30 million and
2 \$50 million, those are what's going to
3 be the annual losses, and plus. So, you
4 know, by downplaying the impacts, the
5 negative impacts, you're justifying the
6 diversion.

7 When you take it from a level
8 10 times higher than that, then you'll
9 see alternatives, and that's where
10 colmates -- are you all familiar with
11 colmates? Colmates are levying the size
12 and providing a channel straight to the
13 Gulf.

14 So that is something I'd like
15 to see a little more work and research
16 into. It's an ancient form that was
17 used in Egypt, it was used in Italy, and
18 it can work here to make this actually a
19 lot better project, because otherwise,
20 this is going to be problematic. You
21 know, the seafood industry, they've been
22 talking about this, you know, from the
23 beginning of this discussion, 10, 15
24 years ago, and I just think, you know,
25 it's time that we sit down and get more

1 serious about these negative impacts.
2 Thank you for the opportunity to
3 comment.

4 MR. LaBORDE:

5 Yeah, and certainly, thank you
6 for your comment. Some of the things
7 that you hit on reminded me of some
8 scoping comments. The term colmate,
9 I'm -- you know, going back to 2017,
10 it's hard to recall a specific comment,
11 but if there is something there that we
12 need to address and look into further,
13 we certainly will do so for the final
14 EIS.

15 MR. FRANKLIN:

16 And we want to thank everyone.
17 The chat seems to be very popular this
18 morning. We have many individuals
19 offering comment and questions via the
20 chat, so that is an active way to
21 communicate, and it seems as though
22 you're taking advantage of that.

23 So, Mr. LaBorde, at this time
24 that was the last speaker, and if you
25 have any other comments based on the

1 chat, we can proceed.

2 MR. LaBORDE:

3 Okay. I think we had some
4 things come through that some of the
5 other panelists may be able to address.
6 I don't know if we'd like to do that now
7 or it's something that maybe we could do
8 after a short break here. So I'll leave
9 that on the table and somebody can stop
10 me if and when we should do that.

11 And in the meantime, I'll go
12 through some of the chat items. So we
13 have one about other alternatives being
14 considered. Some of the alternatives
15 that you see in the EIS, that's the
16 items that we carried forth. It
17 certainly is not the list of
18 alternatives that we looked at, as a
19 whole.

20 So Chapter 2 provides a good
21 writeup of some of the other restoration
22 techniques that we had, that we had
23 reviewed, as well as Appendix D of the
24 EIS gives a more detailed analysis of
25 the process that we went through in

1 landing on the alternatives that we did.

2 And in addition to that,
3 Chapter 2 should lay out for you why
4 certain alternatives were or were not
5 carried forward for the indepth analysis
6 of the EIS.

7 To follow back on Ms. Tucker's
8 comment about housing -- raising houses
9 and fair market value, I think that that
10 is something that can be considered when
11 we move forward to drafting the final
12 EIS, and just to remind the folks that
13 are involved with the meeting today,
14 that the mitigation is something that we
15 will go back to CPRA for feedback on,
16 and they would ultimately be the ones
17 that would be responsible for
18 implementing these actions, if we can
19 issue a permit for the project, as
20 proposed.

21 There was a chat comment that
22 listed the number of times folks were
23 flooded in Happy Jack. In addition to
24 Myrtle Grove, Happy Jack is an area that
25 we looked at for the EIS.

1 We'll make that comment a part
2 of the public record, and in addition to
3 that, I would direct you, again, to
4 Section 4.27, the Mitigation Summary,
5 for information on that.

6 We did get a live comment about
7 annual losses associated with the oyster
8 industry. Appreciate that comment. And
9 we'll consider that for the final as
10 well.

11 MR. LANDRY:

12 Brad, if I could jump in real
13 quick. You do have, and you've
14 mentioned them, a number of comments
15 related to the evaluation of other
16 alternatives besides diversions.

17 From a Louisiana Trustee
18 Implementation Group perspective, I want
19 to make sure folks are aware that, in
20 the Strategic Restoration Plan for the
21 Barataria Basin that the Louisiana
22 Trustee Implementation Group put
23 together, that was Restoration Plan and
24 Environmental Assessment No. 3. You can
25 take a look at that for some of the

1 evaluation we did regarding
2 non-diversion alternatives, and, in
3 fact, we selected the Louisiana Trustee
4 Implementation Group, the three
5 alternatives, as part, or three features
6 as part of our preferred alternative,
7 including two non-diversion features,
8 including large-scale marsh creation and
9 ridge restoration of the Barataria
10 Basin. And both of those efforts are
11 funded and approved for construction,
12 and we expect construction to begin this
13 year.

14 But, again, you can take a look
15 at the Strategic Restoration Plan for
16 the Barataria Basin, located on the
17 Trustee's website, for additional
18 information on that evaluation.

19 MR. FRANKLIN:

20 Thank you, Mel. We're going to
21 just pause for a second to see if any
22 others submit their names into the
23 questions box, to get into the speaking
24 queue.

25 MR. LaBORDE:

1 Yeah, and I think I'm up to
2 date with the chat, the updates on the
3 chat, so certainly, if there's someone
4 out there who had a comment that was in
5 the chat that maybe you didn't feel like
6 got addressed or acknowledged today,
7 re-enter it so you can be assured that
8 we've put eyes on it.

9 MR. FRANKLIN:

10 Okay. So I think at this time
11 I'm going to propose a break,
12 Mr. Laborde, and let's go into a break
13 until 11:00 p.m. -- or 11:00 am, I'm
14 sorry, Central. 11:00 a.m., Central,
15 and we'll just simply continue to
16 monitor. If your name goes into the
17 questions box, we'll continue to
18 monitor, and then we'll reactivate our
19 cameras at 11:00 a.m. and continue
20 forward.

21 So I encourage all of our more
22 than 100 participants to continue to
23 submit your comments and questions via
24 the chat, and if you would like to make
25 a verbal comment, please submit your

1 name into the questions box and we'll
2 have you in the queue when we come back
3 at 11:00 am.

4 So at this moment, we will take
5 a quick 10-minute break and we will be
6 back shortly. Thank you.

7 (Break was taken).

8 MR. FRANKLIN:

9 Okay. We would like to welcome
10 everyone back. That was a quick,
11 10-minute break, and we just want to
12 thank you again for joining us with the
13 Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion virtual
14 public meeting to learn about the
15 project, to gain additional insight
16 about the project, and also to allow you
17 to offer your public comment with
18 regards to the project.

19 I just want to remind everyone
20 that the public comment period ends on
21 May 4th, and today is only one mechanism
22 or path to give your public comment.

23 You can go online and we will
24 put that URL up for your information.

25 You can use U.S. Postal Service to

1 physically mail in your comment. You
2 can put things into the chat box. And
3 that seems to be a very popular method
4 this morning, individuals putting their
5 thoughts and comments into the chat box.
6 And Brad Laborde has been going through
7 that list and ensuring that we
8 acknowledge your information in the
9 chat.

10 Some of you have had difficulty
11 with your audio. If you are joining
12 this webinar via your computer and you
13 are having difficulty with either the
14 PIN or the microphone, in the "Go to
15 Webinar" interface, there's a little
16 microphone icon. If that icon is red
17 when it is your turn in the queue to
18 speak, please just click on that with
19 your mouse, and it should be green
20 before you begin to speak.

21 At this time, we do have one
22 individual who would like to give public
23 comment, and that is Doug Daigle. If
24 you can hear us, Doug Daigle, please
25 proceed. You'll be given three minutes

1 to give your public comment, and if
2 you're representing an organization,
3 please state the name of your
4 organization. Doug Daigle.

5 (ZOOM technical difficulties).

6 MR. FRANKLIN:

7 You should be in the queue
8 properly, Mr. Daigle, and if your
9 microphone is green, you should proceed
10 to your comment.

11 Okay. If you will proceed to
12 chat, Mr. Daigle, it seems as if you are
13 going to chat your comment or question
14 in, and we'll get that and make sure
15 that we acknowledge it.

16 Mr. Daigle, if you can hear my
17 voice, you're next up to give your
18 public comment. Okay, he's connected.
19 He may have stepped away. But he's also
20 acknowledged, he may send it in via
21 chat.

22 MR. LaBORDE:

23 I do see a chat from
24 Mr. Daigle. It has to do with the lack
25 of a reference, perhaps, with respect to

1 the Gulf hypoxia action plan.

2 And just to reiterate, and I
3 think I alluded to this in our
4 presentation, or the prerecorded
5 presentation, that at least for the
6 Corps, you know, we're still in
7 evaluation phase. We're making sure
8 that the EIS is based off the best
9 available science, engineering and
10 information available to us.

11 So if folks out there have
12 references or information that they'd
13 like to suggest we take a further look
14 at, then they can make that part of
15 their comments, and we'll certainly do
16 so, in preparation for the final EIS.

17 MR. FRANKLIN:

18 Great. And he acknowledged, he
19 would like to submit via chat only.
20 Thank you, Mr. Daigle.

21 MR. LaBORDE:

22 All right. I'm trying to keep
23 up with the chat here. We have more
24 comments about the Myrtle Grove
25 community, which is one of the more

1 prominent responses that we've gotten
2 today, which is good feedback, so --
3 sorry if you've heard this a couple
4 times already, but information about
5 that can be found in section or
6 Chapter 4.13, socioeconomics,
7 Chapter 4.20, Public Health and Safety.

8 We also have information about
9 mitigation in Section 4.27. You know,
10 the flooding issue is something that
11 will be considered with our permit
12 decision. We have a number of things,
13 both pro and con, that we'll have to
14 weigh before we make our decision on
15 whether or not to issue or deny CPRA's
16 permit. So thank you for your feedback.

17 There's an additional comment
18 here about road elevation in Happy Jack.
19 It seems that there has been some recent
20 construction to raise roads there, and
21 it looks like the concern is that the
22 potential additional water that the
23 diversion might bring, if constructed,
24 would maybe negate that progress.

25 So that is something that we

1 can also take into consideration, and
2 another point, to take a look at the
3 mitigation measures and provide your
4 input on that, if you haven't already.
5 So thank you for that.

6 Have we got anything else,
7 Perry?

8 MR. FRANKLIN:

9 No, sir. There are no others
10 in the queue to speak at this moment,
11 and if there are any further
12 clarifications, we can do those. And if
13 not, we'll just pause, as we invite
14 others who may want to give a verbal
15 comment. Again, just type your name
16 into the questions box and we'll get you
17 into the speaking queue.

18 MR. LaBORDE:

19 Yeah, and just to go back to
20 some of the things that we may have
21 discussed earlier. I do have an eye on
22 the attendees list, and it has dropped,
23 but, you know, it's hard to tell who
24 maybe has dropped off, and maybe we've
25 gotten some new folks on the line.

1 So if you did miss the
2 presentations, those are preordered and
3 available on the Corps webpage, along
4 with information about where these --
5 the paper or, you know, some of the more
6 tangible pieces of both the Executive
7 Summary and EIS are available, at some
8 of our local libraries here. So our
9 public notice lists those as well.
10 Again, it's on the Corps Mid-Barataria
11 public webpage.

12 In addition to some of the
13 comments that we've gotten on water
14 levels and flooding, we did get some
15 feedback about timing of the diversion
16 with respect to larval recruitment.

17 I'd like to, once again, point
18 folks to Section 4.10, the Aquatic
19 Resources section, as well as the
20 Cumulative Impacts section, which is
21 4.25.

22 MR. FRANKLIN:

23 I think earlier there was a
24 question regarding who was actually
25 participating in this morning's webinar.

1 In addition to the
2 representatives of the U.S. Army Corps
3 of Engineers and NOAA and CPRA that you
4 see on the screen, there are also other
5 Louisiana Trustee Implementation Group
6 members, including the U.S. Department
7 of the Interior, U.S. Environmental
8 Protection Agency, and the U.S.
9 Department of Agriculture, who are
10 involved with this morning's webinar and
11 are listening, and so I just wanted to
12 reiterate that as well.

13 MR. LaBORDE:

14 So, Perry, I feel like the
15 awkward silence is like being on a bad
16 date here, so I don't know if we want to
17 run through some of the -- some more of
18 the chats. We can reiterate some of
19 these things, or we can go ahead and
20 take a break here for 10 or 15 minutes,
21 and then hop back on and see if we have
22 some additional folks added to the queue
23 for our last 30 minutes, before wrapping
24 up at noon. It's totally up to the
25 group.

1 MR. FRANKLIN:

2 Very good. There is a
3 commitment to keep the portal open and
4 active for the general public until
5 noon, and so we are not going to
6 conclude this webinar at this time. I
7 think we're going to go on a break,
8 again, to allow individuals to collect
9 their thoughts, and if they would like
10 to do a verbal question or comment, we
11 invite you, again, to go and just simply
12 submit your name into the questions box
13 to get into the speaking queue. That's
14 going to remain active. If you want to
15 submit a comment or a question via the
16 chat, that's going to remain active
17 during this momentary break.

18 And so at this time, we're
19 going to go into a break until 11:30
20 a.m., but the portal is active, the
21 portal is open, and then we'll come back
22 and answer any questions at that time.

23 And so if that is agreeable to
24 the panel, we'll go ahead and turn off
25 your cameras. We'll continue to monitor

1 the questions box, we will continue to
2 monitor the chat box, and we will come
3 back at 11:30 a.m., Central, and
4 continue with this process.

5 (Break was taken).

6 MR. FRANKLIN:

7 All right. It's about
8 11:30 a.m. We're coming off of a break.
9 At the current time, there are no more
10 speakers in the queue to give verbal
11 comment, but for those who may have
12 joined us after the earlier portion of
13 the webinar, there was an approximately
14 35-minute presentation that was given.
15 That presentation was recorded, and you
16 can go on to the U.S. Army Corps of
17 Engineers website to view that video.
18 You can also view that video in various
19 languages. And so we do have that in
20 place.

21 We do have language translators
22 with us, if needed, in Spanish,
23 Vietnamese and Khmer, and so those
24 translators are standing by, if someone
25 would like to give a verbal comment and

1 needs assistance. And, of course, you
2 can go into the chat, which has been
3 popular this morning, if you want to
4 type a comment or a concern or a
5 question into the chat box. Mr. Laborde
6 will collect those and respond to those
7 accordingly.

8 So at this time, we, again, are
9 keeping the portal open, in the event
10 someone has joined us later in the time
11 frame.

12 MR. LaBORDE:

13 Thanks, Perry. I can circle
14 back to some of the chats that we
15 received while we were on break here.

16 We've got another one about
17 Happy Jack and the status of the roads
18 leading to that area.

19 Just to reiterate, I believe
20 some of the efforts that were suggested
21 earlier with raising the roads, were
22 part of the proposed mitigation
23 measures, so -- and there was a comment
24 about rules and restrictions. So that
25 is something that will be considered, as

1 we work through and get to the final
2 EIS.

3 We received a comment here
4 about the MRGO and how much land that
5 may have built. The MRGO was built to
6 be a shipping channel. It was a Corps
7 project, and there are many Corps
8 documents out there that can be
9 referenced for both its project life and
10 how we wrapped up that as being a
11 federal project.

12 I've got a comment here about
13 dredging for land. I think we talked
14 about dredging islands in the Basin.
15 There were a couple other suggestions we
16 got today. But, I think, for the EIS
17 purposes, folks can take a look at
18 Chapter 2, where we talk about the
19 terrace features that we did carry
20 forward as part of our analysis. The
21 idea behind the terraces was to slow
22 down water and to build some additional
23 land, perhaps. And you can find more
24 information about the terraces in
25 Chapter 2 of the EIS.

1 We have a comment about being
2 against the project until it's clear how
3 it will impact residents affected in the
4 communities. Thank you for that
5 comment. We can consider that with the
6 final EIS.

7 Just to point out, once again,
8 the water level issues and some of those
9 items are available for your review at
10 Section 4.20.

11 There's also a socioeconomic
12 component that folks can look at
13 associated with this project, the
14 alternatives and the no-action, at 4.13.
15 That's the socioeconomic section, once
16 again.

17 There's a chat about buy-outs.
18 So, you know, just to remind folks, CPRA
19 would be responsible for implementing
20 any of the proposed mitigation that's in
21 the EIS, or maybe some of the things
22 that we have brought up today, and those
23 mitigation measures would be considered
24 compensation to offset those impacts
25 with respect to this. It would be to

1 offset impacts to homes that are in the
2 vicinity of the project.

3 Again, folks can take a look at
4 4.27, that mitigation section, for
5 additional information there. And,
6 again, if you review those sections and
7 you feel like something's missing, then
8 that's certainly something that we would
9 want feedback on.

10 There's a comment about
11 relocating brown shrimp. There is no
12 plan to do that, and I'm not aware of
13 any efforts to do something along those
14 lines.

15 And, again, the mitigation plan
16 does have some information about how
17 some of the folks in the industry would
18 perhaps be mitigated for the impact to
19 any loss of service or revenue that they
20 may experience. More on mitigation
21 here, about raising roads, boat docks,
22 and homes, again, 4.27 is our mitigation
23 section where that information can be
24 found.

25 There is a comment here about

1 dumping sand. That is -- marsh creation
2 was a coastal restoration tool that we
3 had looked at in more detail and is
4 summarized in Chapter 2. You can also
5 see Chapter 4.25. That's our Cumulative
6 Impacts section, and Section 4.6, to
7 learn more about some of the marsh
8 creation projects that we either
9 currently have on the landscape, we,
10 being the state, not necessarily the
11 Corps, just coastal restoration
12 projects, in general, that are available
13 or, again, cumulative impacts, where we
14 talk a little bit about some of the
15 future marsh creation projects and how
16 maybe the diversion would work in
17 conjunction with those marsh creation
18 projects.

19 There's a comment in here about
20 Lake Hermitage and the status of that
21 road. Once again, that's a mitigation
22 measure that's being considered by CPRA,
23 and another mitigative measure.

24 And I think that about catches
25 us up here, as we hit about 20 minutes

1 left here before we wrap up for the day.
2 So there is still some time to provide
3 feedback either via phone, orally, or we
4 can continue to go through the chats, as
5 they come through.

6 I know that earlier, we had
7 experienced some technical issues, and
8 believe me, we've all transitioned to
9 doing web meetings here. I do multiple
10 a week, and I still have problems. And
11 a lot of people on our group have
12 problems logging into these things.

13 So, you know, it's not a
14 limitation on your end. It's just, you
15 know, sometimes the machine is a little
16 finicky, and I have to maybe hang up or
17 call back in, or try to do some of the
18 other prompts that are available to you
19 out there.

20 Another issue, we heard that a
21 little bit with the echoing. If you are
22 participating by phone, it is a good
23 idea to mute your computer speakers so
24 we don't get that feedback.

25 I can go ahead and remind folks

1 that, at least for the Corps, we have
2 not made a decision on this project.
3 It's still very much in review.

4 As you all are aware, the draft
5 EIS is -- it's another step both in the
6 public coordination process, with us
7 being here with you today, and it's
8 another step in the NEPA process, the
9 National Environmental Policy Act.

10 So back in August 2017, we held
11 scoping meetings to better understand
12 your concerns, and we hope to do that
13 with the development of the draft EIS.
14 We've tried to disclose the anticipated
15 impact with your concerns in mind.

16 So, again, thanks for your
17 comments today. Many of you have
18 brought up points that maybe we need to
19 go back and double-check and make sure
20 that we're adequate with our responses,
21 make sure that we're applying the best
22 science and engineering and best
23 practices. So, again, thank you.

24 MR. FRANKLIN:

25 All right. And we'll just

1 pause at this time, as we await any
2 additional chats or individuals who
3 wanted to give a verbal comment.

4 For those who are with us, if
5 you have friends or family or colleagues
6 who cannot participate in today's
7 meeting, this same meeting will be done
8 again.

9 There are going to be three
10 public meetings. They're all the same.
11 And so if you've attended today's
12 meeting, please share with others that
13 this meeting will also take place again
14 tomorrow, Wednesday, April 7th, at
15 1:00 p.m., and then again on Thursday,
16 April 8th, at 6:00 p.m.

17 And so if you have either
18 friends, family or colleagues who would
19 like to also participate, take advantage
20 of this fact-learning opportunity, today
21 was not the only opportunity, and so
22 there will be two additional this week;
23 tomorrow, 1:00 p.m., and Thursday at
24 6:00 p.m.

25 MR. LaBORDE:

1 There are a couple of chat
2 comments that are here that we're
3 working on responses to, so just sit
4 tight, please.

5 MR. FRANKLIN:

6 Okay.

7 MR. LaBORDE:

8 It looks like we have a comment
9 here. What are the chances of stopping
10 this project?

11 I'm not a good gambler, but as
12 I reiterated earlier, you know, the
13 Corps hasn't made a decision on this
14 project, and I think earlier, there was
15 a reference to cost benefit, and cost
16 benefit is something that's important
17 for the Corps, on the civil works end.

18 For the Corps regulatory side,
19 we don't necessarily do cost benefit
20 ratios. Instead, we do a public
21 interest review, which is us weighing a
22 number of the factors.

23 Many of them, we list out in
24 Chapters 2 and 3, as well as in the
25 presentation, there's a list of the

1 items that we're looking at to weigh
2 that, those impacts, both pro and con,
3 then throwing in some of the mitigative
4 measures that are being proposed by the
5 applicant in order to make our decision
6 on whether or not to approve or deny
7 CPRA's project, or proffer another
8 alternative that we can carry forward in
9 the EIS.

10 There is a comment about
11 impacts to bottle-nose dolphins and sea
12 turtles and how many may be killed by
13 this project. I would ask folks who are
14 interested in that to refer to
15 Chapter 4. That would be 4.11. That's
16 the Marine Mammals section, which would
17 cover impacts for dolphins.

18 And the next section is 4.12,
19 the Threatened and Endangered Species,
20 Section 4, impacts to sea turtles there.

21 It's also -- again, this might
22 fall along the lines of cost benefit
23 with respect to how many acres of land
24 could be built with respect to the price
25 of the project. Folks out there can

1 refer to Section 4.2, regarding the
2 acreages of projected lands to be built
3 under each one of the alternatives, that
4 we carried forth for analysis, in
5 Chapter 2.

6 Again, with respect to a lot of
7 these comments, from the Corps
8 perspective, to remind folks, you know,
9 this isn't just a Corps and federal
10 agency effort. The Corps also has a
11 third-party contractor, with teams of
12 subject matter experts that cover many
13 different fields, many different people.

14 Chapter 7 has the list of
15 preparers where you can find information
16 on that, which, you know, lists out, for
17 anyone who's interested, to see the
18 qualifications and the team that we've
19 put together that is independently
20 reviewing all the material that's going
21 into the document, as well as drafting
22 it.

23 MR. FRANKLIN:

24 And I'll just remind everyone,
25 there's no one in the queue at this

1 moment to make verbal comment, and if
2 you would like to make a verbal comment
3 before we conclude shortly, just simply
4 type your name into the questions box
5 and we will call upon you.

6 MR. LaBORDE:

7 And earlier, I think I said
8 Chapter 7, but it might be Chapter 6
9 that has that list of scientists and
10 subject matter experts for the EIS.
11 Yeah, Chapter 6 is the list of
12 preparers. Sorry about that. It's a
13 big document.

14 MR. FRANKLIN:

15 We can go back to the slide of
16 how to comment on the draft EIS and NRDA
17 RP. If we can just give those comments,
18 again, for those individuals.

19 And the biggest take-away is,
20 is that May 4th is the final date to
21 give public comment. And, again, you
22 can see, there's multiple ways to submit
23 comments. You can do it electronically,
24 at the first URL, you can do it via U.S.
25 Mail to the U.S. Army Corps of

1 Engineers. That just needs to be
2 postmarked on or before the comment
3 deadline, which is May 4th. You can
4 call the 1-866-211-9205 number and you
5 can give that comment at any time before
6 May 4th, at your leisure. And, of
7 course, if you do not give verbal
8 comment at today's meeting, this meeting
9 will be replicated again tomorrow, at
10 1:00 p.m., and also on Thursday at
11 6:00 p.m., and so there's multiple ways
12 that you can offer your public comment,
13 and also to learn more about this very
14 important project. Thank you.

15 MR. LaBORDE:

16 All right. We've got a
17 question about increasing the dead zone
18 in the Gulf, perhaps, as a result of the
19 project. We do discuss hypoxia in the
20 water quality section. That's in
21 Chapter 4. 4.5 is where you can find
22 information about that.

23 There is a question about using
24 the money for the diversion for land
25 building. It is a topic that's come up

1 with our review.

2 So there's a money aspect
3 associated with this as well as
4 available sediment. So I think we hit
5 on that a little bit in Chapter 2, so I
6 would suggest to check that out and see
7 if that answers your question. And if
8 it doesn't, again, it's something mainly
9 you could follow up with us on.

10 I'm showing about eight minutes
11 left here, and I know that we're going
12 to move into, I guess, our final slides
13 here before we wrap up, but I do want to
14 apologize for some of the -- maybe some
15 of the technical issues that we had
16 early on. It seems like we've got it
17 straightened out, so that's a good
18 thing.

19 And, you know, I mentioned
20 earlier that August 2017 is when we did
21 scoping, so we've been working on this
22 for quite some time, and it is good to
23 get it out to you all for different
24 viewpoints and feedback. So it's been
25 much appreciated.

1 MR. FRANKLIN:

2 Well, very good. I would like
3 to thank all of those individuals that
4 have presented and who have been working
5 on this significant matter.

6 Thank you, translators, for
7 joining us today.

8 Ladies and gentlemen, this
9 concludes our public comment portion of
10 today's webinar, and we thank you for
11 your participation. If you find that
12 you have additional comments you would
13 like to make or you were unable to make
14 a verbal comment this morning, please
15 note that you can do so in a number of
16 ways, and you can see on your screen
17 there, the ways that you can do it.

18 We appreciate all the input we
19 have received thus far and we will
20 continue to receive through May 4th.

21 As a reminder, the feedback you
22 provide will be considered as part of
23 the final EIS and Restoration Plan that
24 is scheduled to be released in the
25 spring of 2022 which will inform the

1 permit decisions that will be made
2 shortly thereafter.

3 Again, there are two additional
4 webinars, that if your friends, family
5 or colleagues would like to participate
6 in them, tomorrow, 1:00 p.m., Thursday,
7 at 6:00 p.m.

8 Thank you all for attending
9 this webinar. We hope you found this
10 meeting informative. Have a good rest
11 of your day and evening. Thank you.

12 This concludes today's webinar.

13 (Meeting concluded at
14 12:00 Noon)

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

This certification is valid only for a transcript accompanied by my original signature and original required seal on this page.

I, Linda G. Griffin, RPR, Certified Court Reporter in and for the State of Louisiana, as the officer before whom this meeting was taken, do hereby certify that this was reported by me in the stenotype reporting method, was prepared and transcribed by me or under my personal direction and supervision, and is a true and correct transcript to the best of my ability and understanding; that the transcript has been prepared in compliance with transcript format guidelines required by statute or by rules of the board, that I have acted in compliance with the prohibition on contractual relationships, as defined by Louisiana Code of Civil Procedure Article 1434 and in rules and advisory opinions of the board; that I am not related to counsel or the parties herein, nor am I otherwise interested in the outcome of this matter.

LINDA G. GRIFFIN, RPR
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**Attachment: Virtual Webinar Question/Comment
Chat Report**

**Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion (MBSD)
Virtual Public Meeting**

Chat Report

Tuesday, April 6, 2021

This report details the written questions and comments that were received from a commenter via the virtual webinar's chat box function. Where applicable, responses to the questions and comments were provided either written via the chat box function or verbally by a panelist. Reviewers are referred to the oral transcript for details on the verbal responses given during the webinar.

Last Name	First Name	Comment/Question via Chat	Response Given via Chat
Cornish	Victoria	Hello, this is Victoria Cornish, representing the Marine Mammal Commisison. We plan to submit written comments so have no comments at this time. However, given the length of the DEIS and the complexity of models presented, is it possible to request an extension of the comment period for at least an additional 30 days?	<p>*See oral transcript for additional verbal response.</p> <p>Thank you. We've received your question and will do our best to get you a response.</p> <p>We encourage you to formally submit any request for a time extension of the public comment period through the Comment portal. USACE and the LATIG will consider any such requests for extension.</p>
Daigle	Doug	In reviewing the Draft EIS, I have seen sections on nitrogen and phosphorus under Water Quality, including mentions of Gulf of Mexico hypoxia. I have not so far seen a mention of the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan, which the State of Louisiana as well as most of the federal TIG agencies are signatories to, and which calls for a 20% reduction in nitrogen and phosphorus loading to the Gulf by 2025, with subsequent reductions to the year 2035. An inclusion of this Plan and the reductions in Mississippi-Atchafalaya River nutrient loads would seem pertinent to the EIS.	<p>*See oral transcript for additional verbal response.</p> <p>Thank you. We've received your comment. We will record the comment and consider this comment in the Final EIS.</p>
Daigle	Doug	I neglected to include my contact information in my earlier comment in the Chat on Gulf Hypoxia, and specifically the apparent lack of reference in the EIS to the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan. Louisiana Hypoxia Working Group.	<p>Thank you. We've noted the clarification.</p>
Eppley	Dina	What does sustain 20% of the marsh mean? Does that mean this will keep 20% of the land we have today? Does it mean we'll add 20% to the land - is that based on the land we have today or the land we would've had in 2050?	<p>*See oral transcript for additional verbal response.</p> <p>Thank you. We've received your question and will do our best to get you an answer.</p>
Eppley	Dina	Will the diversion flow constantly or only be opened at certain times?	<p>*See oral transcript for additional verbal response.</p> <p>Thank you. We've received your question and will do our best to get you an answer.</p>
Gasquet	John	Will CPRA offer buy outs to homes that will no longer be accessible after the diversion is completed?	<p>*See oral transcript for additional verbal response.</p> <p>Thank you. We've received your question and will do our best to get you a response</p>
Gasquet	John	Or raise our access road and boats docks and under our homes?	<p>*See oral transcript for additional verbal response.</p> <p>Thank you. We've received your question and will do our best to get you a response.</p>
Gasquet	John	Why in other areas of our coast they are dumping sand and build land now and not waiting 30 years to build a small amount of land at such a great cost?	<p>*See oral transcript for additional verbal response.</p> <p>Thank you. We've received your question and will do our best to get you a response.</p> <p>Marsh creation and land building via pumps/pipelines/or mechanical methods are still planned for the basin. See Chap. 4 Section 4.25 Cumulative impacts and Section 4.6 Wetlands to learn more about those projects and how the proposed diversion may help sustain existing and future wetlands. Building marsh through sediment pumping was selected by the Louisiana Trustee Implementation Group as part of the preferred alternative for restoration in this area as part of Restoration Plan #3. That project is currently approved and funded for construction and is anticipated to begin construction later this year.</p>
Gasquet	John	Will Lake Hermitage road be raised?	<p>*See oral transcript for additional verbal response.</p> <p>Thank you. We've received your question and will do our best to get you a response.</p> <p>Proposed mitigation measures being considered by CPRA could include raising roads impacted by the project.</p>

Gasquet	John	How many bottlenose dolphins and sea turtles will be killed by this project?	<p>*See oral transcript for additional verbal response.</p> <p>Please refer to Chapter 4, Section 4.11 Marine Mammals for impacts to dolphins and Section 4.12 T&E species for impacts to sea turtles.</p>
Gasquet	John	Also how many acres of land could be built with \$2 billion dollars?	<p>*See oral transcript for additional verbal response.</p> <p>Thank you. We've received your question and will do our best to get you a response.</p> <p>Please refer to Section 4.2 regarding the acreages of land projected to be built under each of the alternatives considered.</p>
Gasquet	John	How much will this project increase the dead zone in the Gulf?	<p>*See oral transcript for additional verbal response.</p> <p>Thank you. We've received your question and will do our best to get you a response.</p>
Guccione	Melinda	As a resident of Myrtle Grove, I have serious concerns regarding the future of our neighborhood. We chose to live "on" the water not "in" the water. We have invested substantially in our way of life and don't want to see it ruined. Referencing some sections in the documents is not going to give us a realistic and comprehensive answer to our financial losses if it comes to that.	<p>*See oral transcript for additional verbal response.</p> <p>Thank you. We've received your comment.</p> <p>Your comment will be reviewed and recorded as part of the public record. The impacts to Myrtle Grove are also considered by MVN in their permit decision. CPRA is responsible for implementing any proposed mitigation which will be addressed in their Mitigation Plan.</p>
Jiles	Alexandra	Can someone from the USACE, CPRA or the other organizations here please reiterate why alternatives that do not involve the diversion are not being considered? Is the reason cost alone? Is dredging not determined to be effective?	<p>*See oral transcript for additional verbal response.</p> <p>Thank you. We've received your question and will do our best to get you an answer.</p> <p>Non-diversion alternatives were considered as part of the Trustee's strategic restoration plan for the Barataria Basin (Restoration Plan & Environmental Assessment #3). The trustees selected two additional features besides diversions including large scale marsh creation and ridge restoration. Those projects have been approved and funded for construction and are anticipated to begin construction this year.</p>
Jiles	Alexandra	Where did the total of 33mil for stewardship to fisheries come from?	<p>Thank you. We've received your question and will do our best to get you a response.</p>
Kuehne	Cynthia	I am also a resident in Myrtle Grove. I have worked my entire life and finally decided it was time to build my retirement home down here on the water. When I built down here I accepted the fact that we were outside of the levee system and would be affected by "Natural Disasters". I cannot accept the fact that my investment and way of life will be totally altered for a "Man-made Project". Not sure what the answer is at this time to remedy the problem but the data in the DEIS is very vague about this issue. We need answers.	<p>*See oral transcript for additional verbal response.</p> <p>Thank you. We've received your comment.</p> <p>Thank you for your comment. Please see details regarding projected impacts to Myrtle Grove in Section 4.20 Public Health and Safety and potential mitigation measures being proposed by CPRA for these impacts in Section 4.27 Mitigation Summary.</p>
Loup	Shannon	Can the webinar be played back for someone who is unable to attend at this time?	<p>*See oral transcript for additional verbal response.</p> <p>Yes, it will be available on the Corps MBSB webpage shortly after the meetings</p>
Loup	Shannon	I technically do not have a comment. I have a question. Is that allowed? Will I get an answer?	<p>*See oral transcript for additional verbal response.</p> <p>Yes it is allowed. You can provide a question and we will provide additional information if available or direct you to the location of additional information in the EIS and/or NRDA Restoration Plan. In response to your statement, potential impacts of flooding on Myrtle Grove can be found in Section 4.20. Public Health and Safety and 4.13 Socioeconomics. Discussion of mitigation for these impacts can be found in Section 4.27 Mitigation Summary.</p>
Loup	Shannon	I am concerned as to what will happen to Myrtle Grove Estates.	<p>Thank you. We've received your comment.</p> <p>Thank you for expressing your concern. The impacts discussed in Section 4.20 Public Health and Safety and 4.13 Socioeconomics will be considered in the decision-making regarding permitting and funding of this project.</p>
Loup	Shannon	I would like to say officially that I am against the diversion especially until it is more clear how it will impact residence in the affected communities.	<p>Thank you. We've received your comment.</p> <p>Your comment will be reviewed and recorded as part of the public record.</p>

Mackenroth	Theodore	Teddy Mackenroth: Are you planning to narrow the bay long pass and 4 bayou pass during this project? Also are there restrictions on receiving monies to raise our homes? Like homestead exemption most of us have 2 homes and can only claim one exemption.	*See oral transcript for additional verbal response. Thank you. We've received your question and will do our best to get you a response.
Mackenroth	Theodore	Are you planning to build islands in Barataria Bay to slow tidal water down?	*See oral transcript for additional verbal response. Thank you. We've received your question and will do our best to get you a response. Building of terraces is included in three alternatives in the EIS. No additional island building is proposed as part of this project.
Mackenroth	Theodore	If this diversion does build land and closes off our main bayous, will you come in and dredge our bayous open?	*See oral transcript for additional verbal response. Thank you. We've received your question and will do our best to get you an answer. Please refer to Chapter 4, Section 4.27 Mitigation regarding CPRA's proposed plan for impacts to navigation channels.
Mackenroth	Theodore	People on Martin Lane (Happy Jack) have the same concerns as Myrtle Grove!!!!	*See oral transcript for additional verbal response. Thank you. We've received your comment. Thank you for your comment. Impacts to Happy Jack are discussed in Section 4.20 Public Health and Safety and 4.13 Socioeconomics and will be considered in the decision-making regarding permitting and funding of this project.
Mackenroth	Theodore	On Happy Jack we were flooded 51 times in 2018, 77 times in 2019, and 70 times in 2020. We need our road and homes raised because of the amount of rise in water.	*See oral transcript for additional verbal response. Thank you. We've received your comment. Thank you for your comment. It will be part of public record. Mitigation for impacts to homes from induced flooding is discussed in Section 4.27 Mitigation Summary.
Mackenroth	Theodore	If you know tidal water erodes, then narrowing 4 bayou should be a high priority. This should be added to this project.	*See oral transcript for additional verbal response. Noted. Thank you for your comment.
Mackenroth	Theodore	Happy Jack - Our road is too low, they just raised our flood elevation, sewer lines are too low they get flooded enough that they shut them off, and we are going to need help if this goes through. Worried about what rules or restriction they will have on who gets help.	*See oral transcript for additional verbal response. Thank you. We've received your comment. Efforts such as the ones you've suggested are part of the proposed mitigation measures. Your input on rules and restrictions will be considered as we finalize the EIS.
Mackenroth	Theodore	The MRGO was a shipping channel but it was also a diversion. How much land did it build? If it did build land why would you close it?	*See oral transcript for additional verbal response. Thank you. We've received your question and will do our best to get you a response.
Mackenroth	Theodore	Wouldn't it be better to dredge land and fill in before you put the diversion in. Would this not help to slow water down for the sediment to work and stop tidal surge?	*See oral transcript for additional verbal response. Thank you. We've received your question and will do our best to get you a response.
Mackenroth	Theodore	Mentioned earlier about relocating brown shrimp, how would you do that and what happens to the smaller shrimper that can not travel as far to catch them?	*See oral transcript for additional verbal response. Thank you. We've received your question and will do our best to get you a response. CPRA is responsible for implementing any proposed mitigation which will be addressed in their Mitigation Plan, which could include assistance to shrimpers.
Mackenroth	Theodore	What are the chances of stopping this project?	*See oral transcript for additional verbal response. All public comments as well as EIS impact analyses and CPRA proposed mitigation measures are being taken into consideration by the USACE in their decision whether or not to permit the project.
Mackenroth	Theodore	If you used the money from the diversion, how much more land could you build by dredging as compared to the land that the diversion will build?	*See oral transcript for additional verbal response. Thank you. We've received your question and will do our best to get you a response.
Mackenroth	Theodore	How much will it cost to operate this diversion every year?	Thank you. We've received your question and will do our best to get you a response.

Morris	Grace	Grace Morris, Sierra Club, New Orleans, brief comment at this time: request to extend the public comment period by 60 days from May 4th, request that CPRA, USACE and NOAA/TIG work with Plaquemines Parish Councilmember of District 7, Councilmember LaFrance, Sr to hold community meetings with District 7 communities -- such as Ironton, Myrtle Grove and Wood Park -- and engage in a question and answer session from community	*See oral transcript for additional verbal response. Thank you. We have received your comment.
Pollock	Steve	Dr Steve Pollock PhD. Triple N Oysters: I am extremely worried about the short and long-term consequences of the mid Barataria planned diversion. The EIS seems to support the idea that environmental damage will be immediate, long lasting, and severe. The EIS does not clearly show that the benefits will outweigh the costs of going through with this project. Other alternatives should be considered to minimize severe impacts to the LA fisheries, communities, and gulf coast ecosystems.	*See oral transcript for additional verbal response. Thank you. We've received your comment.
Poole	Katharine	Is this pre-recorded audio right now?	*See oral transcript for additional verbal response. Yes, and it is also available on the Corps Mid Barataria Sediment Diversion webpage under DEIS Meeting Presentations. The public meeting session will be live.
Poole	Katharine	Is there anyone from CPRA/ACOE live on the meeting right now? Will they even be listening live to the public comments?	*See oral transcript for additional verbal response. Yes the presentation is the only pre-recorded portion. The comment portion of the webinar is live and USACE, CPRA, and LATIG representatives will be listening to comments.
Poole	Katharine	How many languages is the EIS released in?	*See oral transcript for additional verbal response. Thank you. We've received your question and will do our best to get you a response. The executive summary is available in Vietnamese and Spanish at libraries and by contacting Public Affairs Office at ricky.d.boyett@usace.army.mil
Poole	Katharine	Seriously? No one can clearly figure out how to make a public comment today with this platform. This is totally impeding on the public's ability to give a comment today.	We are reaching out to those having trouble with the mute control. If you are not able to provide a comment today there are also other ways to comment: written via mail, electronically, and via toll-free number by May 4, 2021
Poole	Katharine	Just want to note the lack of diversity/women in the representatives here today... Very disappointing	*See oral transcript for additional verbal response. Thank you. We've received your comment. Thank you for bringing that to our attention. Comment will be in public record.
Poole	Katharine	Did y'all have any dedicated climate scientists look at this proposal?	*See oral transcript for additional verbal response. Thank you. We've received your question and will do our best to get you a response.
Tritico	Michael	Would it not be a better use of words to say "restore elements injured" than to say "restore injuries" ?	*See oral transcript for additional verbal response. Thank you for your input.
Tritico	Michael	How much consideration has been given to the timing of diversions compared with the timing of aquatic organism migrations and/or passive entrainment of eggs, larvae, and juveniles into the Basin?	*See oral transcript for additional verbal response. See two sections in the EIS, Chap. 4: Section 4.10 Aquatic Resources and 4.25 Cumulative impacts.
Tritico	Michael	Thank you.	