



Landmarks

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REPORTERS LEARN MORE ABOUT RESTORATION

On September 4, 2014, the CWPPRA outreach team worked with reporter Bob Marshall and a group of coastal restoration experts to host day long field trips for the 24th annual Society of Environmental Journalists convention. The theme of this year's convention was "Risk and Resilience."

The CWPPRA team put together an event to highlight the work the wetlands restoration community is engaging in to rebuild coastal Louisiana. Reporters visited two CWPPRA projects during their visit.

The morning tour departed from Empire, LA to the barrier shoreline of Pelican Island. Reporters visited the Barataria Barrier Island Complex Project: Pelican Island to Pass La Mer to Chalant Pass Restoration (BA-38). The Pelican Island project's construction phase was completed in 2012. Reporters arrived on the back side of the island and noticed that the plant community has naturally vegetated the marsh platform.



Reporters prepare for a day in the field. Photo by: Lane Lefort

Walking around the front of the island, the visitors saw the newly planted dune and sand fencing successfully collecting wind-blown material.

The afternoon tour visited the Lake Hermitage Marsh Creation (BA-42) restoration project which is currently under construction. Reporters viewed the active coastal restoration project that is transporting sediment from the bottom of the Mississippi River to the marshes just beyond the levee system. The guests were able to see the pipe that carries sediment from the river, containment areas, and booster pumps used to transport the newest land in Louisiana.

Reports were from a variety of different organizations including Discover magazine, the Los Angeles Times, Ecosystem Marketplace, and Friends of the Earth US.

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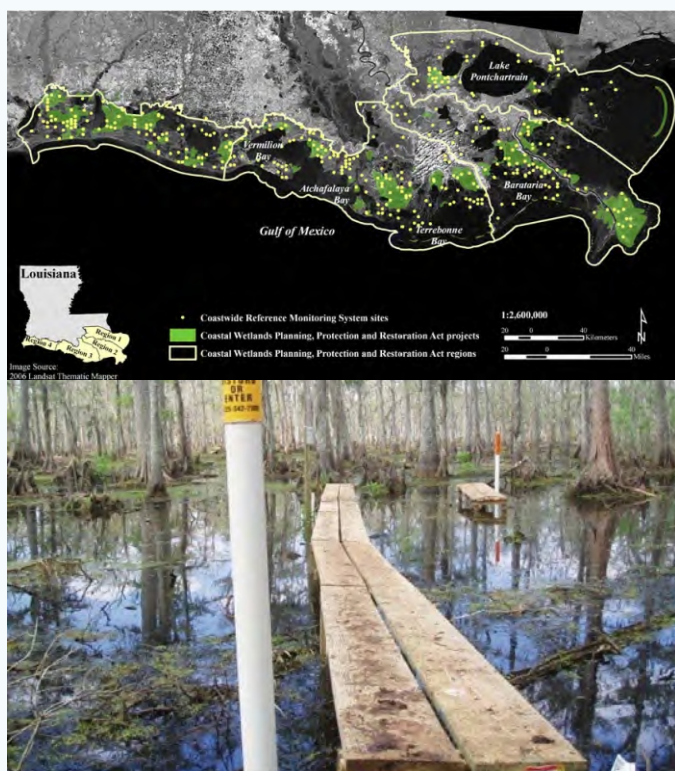
DATES TO REMEMBER...

Nov. 1-5	Restore America's Estuaries Summit	Washington, DC
Nov. 15	Give a Whoop! Teacher Workshop	Lafayette, LA
Dec. 11	Technical Committee Meeting	Baton Rouge, LA
Jan. 22	Task Force Meeting	Lacombe, LA

MORE ABOUT MONITORING AND DEMO PROJECTS

A pioneer in coastal restoration, CWPPRA is seeking answers to the land loss crisis based on the best scientific and engineering knowledge available. On each CWPPRA project, scientists and engineers seek up-to-date understanding of coastal ecosystems and collaborate to set goals, develop designs, and monitor results. Project monitoring is a critical component of any restoration program because it helps assess whether a project technique is working to generate desired ecologic goals. If not, monitoring data can help determine how a project should be adaptively managed to improve design and performance.

Aerial photography and geospatial tools offer a wealth of information about Louisiana's wetlands, but when it comes to monitoring the health of those wetlands, there is no substitute for being there. To understand the cumulative effect of restoration projects on the coastal landscape, the Coastwide Reference Monitoring System (CRMS), supported under the CWPPRA program, is installing monitoring stations at 392 sites across coastal Louisiana.



Year round, staff members travel to the remote monitoring sites to maintain the equipment and collect data.

Spanning the State's coastal zone, the stations monitor hydrology, vegetation, accretion, and erosion, as well as contain documentation of elevation and aerial and ground-level photographs of the monitoring sites. These data are posted on a public Web site, which allows project managers, academia, and landowners to readily retrieve information regarding project performance and ecosystem-level response to projects over time.

To glean lessons from CWPPRA's past projects, scientists must continually monitor habitat health. Project-specific monitoring and the CRMS program help CWPPRA agencies evaluate project success and apply lessons learned to new restoration endeavors.

Like most ecosystems, coastal Louisiana is a dynamic environment. Responding to impacts caused by both natural and engineered elements, Louisiana's coastal wetlands either adapt to or are swept away by larger forces. Restoration solutions must adapt to changing conditions or risk becoming useless. Over the course of 20 years, the CWPPRA program has had to adapt to



Bio-Engineering Oyster Reef Demonstration (LA-08).

environmental changes and rising construction costs to identify ways to be more effective.

MORE ABOUT DEMO PROJECTS

The CWPPRA demonstration program provides an opportunity to investigate new technologies to do exactly this. Each year as part of the project selection process, demonstration projects are nominated on the basis of new technology meeting the following three criteria: (1) it has not been fully developed for routine application, (2) the results are transferable, and (3) the technology is not duplicative. Although demonstration projects are not selected every year, many have been funded. Thoroughly studied to gauge their ability to advance wetland restoration, demonstration projects have tested a variety of new approaches to restoration in hopes of enhancing known techniques and improving performance. These projects have included testing new materials for shoreline protection that may be more suitable for Louisiana's soft soils and testing new ways of dredging and containing sediment used in marsh creation projects. Other projects have involved new approaches to vegetative plantings and techniques for regenerating delicate floating marshes. If a project shows promise, it may be scaled into a larger project that is further studied for applicability coastwide. The success of the demonstration program as a whole is found in members of the public who have been able to introduce their inventions and concepts and in agencies who have



Sediment Containment System for Marsh Creation Demo (LA-09)

embraced the opportunity to think beyond the common restoration techniques to find something truly innovative. On the cutting edge, CWPPRA continues to strive to maximize project efficiency and pioneer new approaches to restoration. ■

YOUTH WETLANDS SUMMIT 2014

On August 24 and 25, 2014, the South Louisiana Wetlands Discovery Center hosted the Wetlands Youth Summit 2014. This event brought young leaders together to discuss the various environmental challenges and potential solutions for gulf coast communities. The Saturday was filled with guest speakers and breakout sessions.

The CWPPRA public outreach team provided students with information on coastal land loss, the CWPPRA's Louisiana restoration efforts, and civic responsibility. Stuart Brown, CWPPRA Environmental Workgroup member from CPRA, also shared examples of CWPPRA's restoration techniques, WVA information, and facilitated cost/benefit discussions. The USGS map titled "Land Area Change in Coastal Louisiana from 1932 to 2010" was also shared with the students. After listening to various presenters, students were tasked with developing action plans addressing local concerns that could be implemented in their communities upon their return home.

Students also had an opportunity to network with each other, view the film "Louisiana Love," and participate in Wetland Olympics. This program was supported in part by grants from BHP Billiton, the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program, the Bayou Community Foundation, the Gray Foundation, the Buquet Family Foundation, and the Fourchon Oilman's Association. These activities help to prepare Louisiana's youth to become good stewards of our natural resources.

Youth interested in participating in similar activities can visit <http://slwdc.org/programs/wys/> to learn more. ■

FAMILIES ENJOY WILD THINGS

In celebration of National Wildlife Refuge Week, CWPPRA outreach staff joined thirty other nature and conservation oriented organizations at the Big Branch Marsh Refuge Headquarters in Lacombe, LA on Saturday, October 18, 2014. At the day-long free event CWPPRA staff members shared information with adults and children about the importance of habitat restoration and conservation. Additionally, children visiting CWPPRA's exhibit had fun identifying appropriate habitats from some of their very favorite wetlands creatures!

The Big Branch Marsh National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters Bayou Lacombe Center on Hwy 434 is open to the public. The refuge was established in 1994 on the initiative of a group of individuals concerned with the pace of development on the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain. Building on this grass-roots effort, lands for a new refuge were acquired by the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service to protect, enhance and manage a valuable wetland

ecosystem. Originally 12,000 acres, the refuge has grown to almost 19,000 acres. It comprises the largest undeveloped natural area along the lake's northern shore. Within it are sandy beaches, offshore grass beds, marshes, hardwood hammocks and pine flatwoods. If you missed the event, you can still visit the refuge. For more information call (985) 882-2000 and ask for David Stoughton.



Cole Ruckstuhl, CWPPRA Media Specialist, teaches youth about the various Louisiana wetland habitats.



COASTAL WETLANDS PLANNING, PROTECTION AND RESTORATION ACT

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