



Land Marks

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TECHNICAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS PROJECTS; RICK HARTMAN HONORED FOR CWPPRA SERVICE

Inside the stately LaBelle Room of the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources' building in downtown Baton Rouge, LA, the CWPPRA Technical Committee meeting begins.

Darryl Clark, representing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the Department of the Interior and one of six agency representatives, opens the meeting with a moment of levity. "I'm a little bit intimidated by sitting up like a jigin in front of y'all."



During the December 7th meeting, speakers provided updates on program funds, project updates, and funding requests. The main item on the agenda was the selection of potential PPL27 projects. After an evaluation of the candidate projects using cost-benefit analyses and public input, the committee ultimately recommended four projects for Phase I Engineering and Design and two projects for Phase II Construction. The final vote will take place at the Task Force meeting on January 25th, 2018 in New Orleans, LA. *(continued on page 2...)*



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UPCOMING EVENTS

Jan. 17	CPRA Board Meeting	Baton Rouge, LA
Jan. 25	CWPPRA Task Force Meeting	New Orleans, LA
Jan. 30	CWPPRA Regional Planning Team Region IV Meeting	Grand Chenier, LA
Jan. 31	CWPPRA Regional Planning Team Region III Meeting	Morgan City, LA
Feb. 1	CWPPRA Regional Planning Team Regions I & II Meeting	Lacombe, LA
Feb. 1	BTNEP Mgmt. Conference Meeting	Thibodaux, LA
Feb. 2	World Wetlands Day	N/A
Feb. 21	CPRA Board Meeting	Baton Rouge, LA
Feb. 23-24	LA Environmental Ed. Symposium	Baton Rouge, LA
Feb. 27	CWPPRA Coastwide Electronic Vote	N/A

Find out more details about these events and other events at:
www.lacoast.gov/calendar

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Of the ten PPL27 candidate projects competing for Phase I funding, the following were recommended:

- Mid Breton Land Bridge Marsh Creation and Terracing
- Bayou Cane Marsh Creation
- Northeast Turtle Bay Marsh Creation and Critical Area Shoreline Protection
- Sabine Marsh Creation Cycles 6&7

Two projects were recommended for construction, including:

- Caminada Headland Back Barrier Marsh Restoration (BA-171)
- Cameron-Creole Freshwater Introduction CU 2 (CS-49)

The Technical Committee also honored their senior member, Richard “Rick” Hartman, for his service to the CWPPRA program. Bren Haase of the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, who worked for Hartman early in his career, described him as “somebody that’s willing to challenge the current way of thinking and the status quo.”



Hartman, a Fishery Biologist for the NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, has been a part of the CWPPRA program since its inception in 1990. He served on the Planning and Evaluation Committee and the Environmental Workgroup before becoming a member of the Technical Committee. Brad Inman of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on the committee, added that Hartman “has always had the coast and improving the coast as his number one goal.”



Hartman with his fellow Technical Committee members (L to R: Bren Haase, Britt Paul, Brad Inman, Richard Hartman, Darryl Clark, and Karen McCormick)

LEARNING ABOUT WETLANDS AND DINING ON INVASIVE SPECIES

On November 18, residents and visitors in St. Bernard Parish were treated to live music, cooking demonstrations, and the chance to sample wild boar recipes prepared by teams vying for bragging rights. Hosted by the Coastal Division of St. Bernard Parish, the first Cook-Off for the Coast was held at Docville Farm in Violet, Louisiana with proceeds benefitting the St. Bernard Wetlands Foundation. In addition to evaluating the food of the six competing teams, visitors watched local celebrity chefs prepare everything from gumbo to snapping turtle and talked with a range of coastal organizations about the importance of protecting southeast Louisiana’s coastal wetlands.

Sinéad Borchert and Mirka Zapletal from the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act (CWPPRA) Outreach Office were in attendance with information about restoration projects in St. Bernard Parish, activity books, posters from the #ProtectOurCoast series, and recent issues of WaterMarks magazine. They also invited children and adults alike to match Louisiana wildlife with the correct wetland habitat. St. Bernard’s coast is vulnerable to storms, subsidence, erosion, and invasive species, putting wildlife habitat and coastal communities at risk. CWPPRA projects work to support Louisiana’s coastal wetlands and the people and wildlife that depend on these habitats.



FEATURED PROJECT: CAMERON-CREOLE FRESHWATER INTRODUCTION

CS-49 Cameron-Creole Freshwater Introduction, co-sponsored by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, was one of two projects recommended for Phase II Construction, Increment I funding at the Technical Committee Meeting on December 7th, 2018.

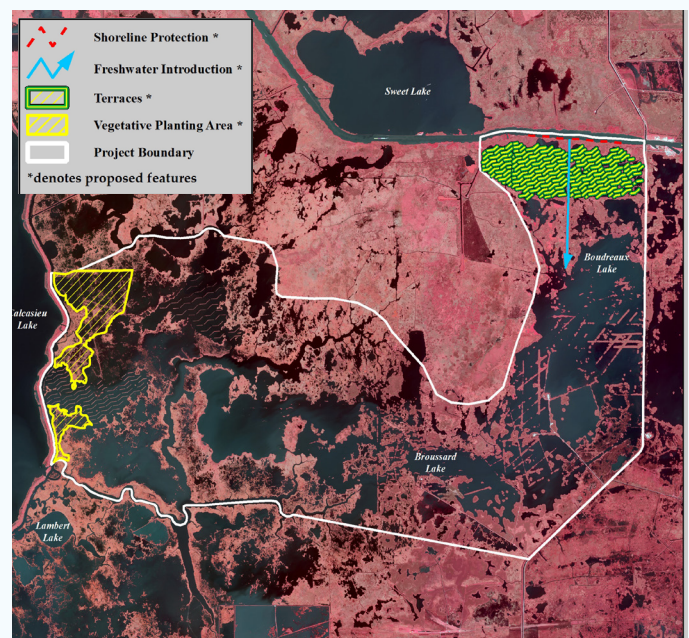
The project area is located on the east side of Calcasieu Lake and west of Gibbstown Bridge and Highway 27. Virtually all of the project area marshes have experienced increased tidal exchange, saltwater intrusion, and reduced freshwater retention resulting from hydrologic changes associated with the Calcasieu Ship Channel and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW). In addition, thousands of acres of marsh were damaged by Hurricane Rita and again, more recently, by Hurricanes Ike and Harvey. Because of man-made alterations to the hydrology, it is unlikely that those marshes will recover without comprehensive restoration efforts. The Cameron-Creole Watershed Project has successfully reduced salinities and increased marsh productivity. However, the area remains disconnected from freshwater, sediments, and nutrients available from the GIWW.

The freshwater introduction project would restore the function, value, and sustainability to approximately 22,510 acres of marsh and open water by improving hydrologic conditions via freshwater input and increasing organic productivity.

Ron Boustany, a Natural Resources Specialist with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service,

helped develop the project. "The project will reduce the land loss rate and improve the hydrology, primarily through construction of a large hydrologic freshwater introduction structure," says Boustany. "It will reduce salinities, increase freshwater sediments and nutrients to the watershed, maintain the integrity of the southern bank line of the GIWW, and increase fish access to the area."

If approved by the Task Force, construction on the project is estimated to begin in October of this year and take about two years to complete. At a fully funded cost of \$25.6 million, the project is expected to create about 218 net acres of marsh, but will also positively impact 22,510 acres surrounding the project.



At top: Project map for CS-49 (credit: USGS Wetland and Aquatic Research Center)



Hurricane damaged marsh in the project area to be benefitted by the proposed features.



At right: Project location in Cameron Parish

The project is currently in the Planning and Design Phase. The project team has completed all surveying, geotechnical investigations, and modeling requirements and the project has been designed to 95% and ready for construction. The planting portion of the project is completed.

This project is on Priority Project List (PPL) 18.

NETWORKING WITH EDUCATORS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Over 2,000 formal and informal science teachers from across the country gathered in New Orleans, LA at the end of November for the third and final National Science Teachers Association Area Conference of 2017. These conferences are an opportunity for educators to learn about new techniques, share curricula, and experiment with the latest resources. The conference in New Orleans showcased five featured speakers who covered topics as diverse as place-based education, language learning, and weather. Teachers had the opportunity to take short courses, one of which got teachers outside on Louisiana beaches; participate in hands-on workshops, such as '3-2-1 Blast Off!' presented by NASA; and attend a variety of presentations connected to science education.



Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act staff were set up in the Exhibit Hall, ready to introduce teachers to the importance of Louisiana wetlands and the work that is being done to protect them. Teachers had access to the "Understanding CWPPRA", "Partners in Restoration", and "Henri Heron Activity Book" publications, as well as a selection of WaterMarks. Posters and the CWPPRA Wetlands Infographic were also available. In addition to providing free educational materials, CWPPRA staff set up the #ProtectOurCoast photo booth, so that attendees could show their support for wetlands. Science teachers can incorporate wetlands into their lesson plans when discussing water quality, ecosystems, geology, and a host of other topics, helping students understand how wetlands are relevant to their lives and why Louisiana and other states are working so hard to protect them.



COASTAL WETLANDS PLANNING, PROTECTION AND RESTORATION ACT

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