

APPENDIX A

PRIORITY PROJECT LIST 24 SELECTION PROCESS

Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act Guidelines for Development of the 24th Priority Project List

FINAL

I. Development of Supporting Information

A. COE staff prepares spreadsheets indicating status of all restoration projects (CWPPRA Priority Project Lists (PPL) 1-23; Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA) program, Corps of Engineers Continuing Authorities 1135, 204, 206; and State only projects). Also, indicate net acres at the end of 20 years for each CWPPRA project.

B. CPRA/USGS staff prepare basin maps indicating:

- 1) Boundaries of the following projects types (PPLs 1-23; LCA program, COE 1135, 204, 206; and State only).
- 2) Locations of completed projects.
- 3) Projected land loss by 2050 including all CWPPRA projects approved for construction through January 2014.
- 4) Regional boundary maps with basin boundaries and parish boundaries included.

II. Project Nominations

A. The four Regional Planning Teams (RPTs) will meet individually to examine basin maps, discuss areas of need, discuss strategies within Louisiana's Comprehensive Master Plan for a Sustainable Coast (State Master Plan), and accept project nominations by hydrologic basin. Project nominations will be accepted in the following hydrologic basins – Pontchartrain, Breton Sound, Barataria, Terrebonne, Atchafalaya, Teche/Vermilion, Mermentau, and Calcasieu/Sabine. Project nominations will not be accepted in the Mississippi River Delta Basin as strategies for this basin are not included within the State Master Plan. Project nominations that provide benefits or construct features in more than one basin shall be presented in the basin receiving the majority of the project's benefits. The RPT leaders, in coordination with the project proponents and the P&E Subcommittee, will determine which basin to place multi-basin projects. Alternatively, multi-basin projects can be broken into multiple projects to be considered individually in the basins which they occur. Project nominations that are legitimate coast-wide applications will be accepted separate from the eight basins at any of the four RPT meetings.

Proposed project nominees shall be consistent with the State Master Plan. Those projects determined to be inconsistent with the State Master Plan will be removed from consideration as PPL24 nominees. Representatives of the State will be present at the RPT meetings to provide guidance on the consistency of project nominations. Nominations for demonstration projects will also be accepted at any of the four RPT meetings. Those wishing to propose projects are encouraged to work with representatives of the State prior to the RPT meetings to develop projects that are consistent with the State Master Plan

In the event that similar projects are proposed within the same area, the RPT representatives will determine if those projects are sufficiently different to allow each of them to move forward. If not sufficiently different, such projects will be combined into one project nominee.

The RPTs will not vote to select nominee projects at the individual regional meetings. Rather, voting will be conducted after the individual regional meetings via email or fax. All CWPPRA agencies and parishes will be required to provide the name and contact information during the RPT meetings for the official representative who will vote to select nominee projects.

B. Voting for project nominees (including basin, coast-wide and demonstration project nominees) will be conducted after the individual RPT meetings (date to be determined). The RPTs will select four projects in the Barataria and Terrebonne Basins and three projects in the Breton Sound and Pontchartrain Basins based on the high loss rates (1985-2010) in those basins. Two projects will be selected in the Mermentau, Calcasieu/Sabine, and Teche/Vermilion Basins. Because the Atchafalaya Basin is currently in a land gain situation, only one project will be selected in that basin.

A total of up to 21 basin projects could be selected as nominees. Each officially designated parish representative in the basin will have one vote and each federal CWPPRA agency and the State will have one vote. If coast-wide projects have been presented, the RPTs will select one coast-wide project nominee to compete with the 21 basin nominees for candidate project selection. Selection of a coast-wide project nominee will be by consensus, if possible. If voting is required, officially designated representatives from all coastal parishes will have one vote and each federal CWPPRA agency and the State will have one vote. The RPTs will also select up to six demonstration project nominees at this coast-wide meeting. Selection of demonstration project nominees will be by consensus, if possible. If voting is required, officially designated representatives from all coastal parishes will have one vote and each federal CWPPRA agency and the State will have one vote.

C. Prior to voting on project nominees, the Environmental and Engineering Work Groups will screen each coast-wide project nominated at the RPT meetings to ensure that each qualifies as a legitimate coast-wide application. Should any of those projects not qualify as a coast-wide application, the RPT leaders, in coordination with the project proponents and the P&E Subcommittee, will determine which basin the project should be placed in.

Also, prior to voting on project nominees, the Environmental and Engineering Work Groups will screen each demonstration project nominated at the RPT meetings. Demonstration projects will be screened to ensure that each meets the qualifications for demonstration projects as set forth in the CWPPRA Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), Appendix E.

D. A lead Federal agency will be designated for the nominees and demonstration project nominees to prepare preliminary project support information (fact sheet, maps, and potential designs and benefits). The RPT Leaders will then transmit this information to the P&E Subcommittee, Technical Committee and other RPT members.

III. Preliminary Assessment of Nominated Projects

A. Agencies, parishes, landowners, and other individuals informally confer to further develop projects. Nominated projects shall be developed to support the strategies and goals of the State Master Plan. For help in the development of projects that are consistent with the State Master Plan, please contact State CWPPRA representatives.

B. The lead agency designated for each nominated project will prepare a brief Project Description that discusses possible features. Fact sheets will also be prepared for demonstration project nominees.

C. Engineering and Environmental Work Groups meet to review project features, discuss potential benefits, and estimate preliminary fully funded cost ranges for each project. The Work Groups will also review the nominated demonstration projects and verify that they meet the demonstration project criteria and that they represent potentially viable restoration techniques. If it is determined that a demonstration project is unlikely to be utilized in restoration or has been evaluated previously, the Engineering and Environmental Work Groups may recommend to the Technical Committee that these projects not move forward.

D. P&E Subcommittee prepares matrix of cost estimates and other pertinent information for nominees and demonstration project nominees and furnishes to Technical Committee.

IV. Selection of Phase 0 Candidate Projects

A. Technical Committee meets to consider the project costs and potential wetland benefits of the nominees. Technical Committee will select ten candidate projects for detailed assessment by the Environmental, Engineering, and Economic Work Groups. At this time, the Technical Committee may select up to three demonstration project candidates for detailed assessment by the Environmental, Engineering, and Economic Work Groups.

B. Technical Committee assigns a Federal sponsor for each project to develop preliminary Wetland Value Assessment (WVA) data and engineering cost estimates for Phase 0 as described below.

V. Phase 0 Analysis of Candidate Projects

A. Environmental and Engineering Work Groups and the Academic Advisory Group meet to refine project features and develop boundaries for the project and extended boundaries for estimating land loss.

B. Sponsoring agency coordinates site visits for each project. A site visit is vital so each agency can see the conditions in the area. There will be no site visits conducted for demonstration projects.

C. Sponsoring agency develops a draft WVA and prepares Phase 1 engineering and design cost estimates and Phase 2 construction cost estimates. Sponsoring agency should use formats approved by the applicable work group.

D. Environmental Work Group reviews and approves all draft WVAs. Demonstration project candidates will be evaluated as outlined in Appendix E of the CWPPRA SOP.

E. Engineering Work Group reviews and approves Phase 1 and 2 cost estimates.

F. Economics Work Group reviews cost estimates and develops annualized (fully funded) costs.

G. Corps of Engineers staff prepares information package for Technical Committee. Packages consist of:

- 1) updated Project Fact Sheets;
- 2) a matrix for each region that lists projects, fully funded cost, average annual cost, Wetland Value Assessment results in net acres and Average Annual Habitat Units (AAHUs), and cost effectiveness (average annual cost/AAHU); and
- 3) a qualitative discussion of supporting partnerships and public support.

H. Technical Committee will host a public hearing to present the results from the candidate project evaluations. Public comments will be accepted during the meeting and in writing.

VI. Selection of 24th Priority Project List

A. The selection of the 24th PPL will occur at the Winter Technical Committee and Task Force meetings.

B. Technical Committee meets and considers matrix, Project Fact Sheets, and public comments. The Technical Committee will recommend up to four projects for selection to the 24th PPL. The Technical Committee may also recommend demonstration projects for the 24th PPL.

C. The CWPPRA Task Force will review the Technical Committee recommendations and determine which projects will receive Phase 1 funding for the 24th PPL.

24th Priority List Project Development Schedule (dates subject to change)

December 2013	Distribute public announcement of PPL 24 process and schedule
December 12, 2013	Winter Technical Committee Meeting, approve Phases I and II (Baton Rouge)
January 16, 2014	Winter Task Force Meeting (New Orleans)
January 28, 2014	Region IV Planning Team Meeting (Abbeville)
January 29, 2014	Region III Planning Team Meeting (Morgan City)
January 30, 2014	Regions I and II Planning Team Meetings (New Orleans)
February 18, 2014	Coast-wide RPT Voting (via electronic vote)
February 19 – March 7, 2014	Agencies prepare fact sheets for RPT-nominated projects
March 19-20, 2014	Engineering/ Environmental Work Groups review project features, benefits & prepare preliminary cost estimates for nominated projects (Baton Rouge)
March 2014	P&E Subcommittee prepares matrix of nominated projects showing initial cost estimates and benefits
April 15, 2014	Spring Technical Committee Meeting, select PPL 24 candidate projects (New Orleans)
May/June	Candidate project site visits
May 22, 2014	Spring Task Force Meeting (Lafayette)
July/August/ September	Env/Eng/Econ Work Group project evaluations
September 11, 2014	Fall Technical Committee Meeting, O&M and Monitoring funding recommendations (Baton Rouge)
October 7, 2014	Fall Task Force meeting, O&M and Monitoring approvals (New Orleans)
October 16, 2014	Economic, Engineering, and Environmental analyses completed for PPL 24 candidates
December 11, 2014	Winter Technical Committee Meeting, recommend PPL 24 and Phase I and II approvals (Baton Rouge)
January 2015	Winter Task Force Meeting, select PPL 24 and approve Phase II requests (New Orleans)