

December 1, 1998

**Planning Process for the 9<sup>th</sup> Priority Project List (PPL)  
and the Fiscal Year (FY) 1999 Planning Program Budget**

**1.0 Introduction.**

The finalized version of the PPL 9 planning process is described in the following. This process has been instituted by the Task Force through the work and recommendations of the Planning & Evaluation Subcommittee and Technical Committee. The FY 99 Planning Schedule and Budget for each agency reflects this process and is shown in Encl. 1. For budgeting purposes, tasks previously established for the 8<sup>th</sup> PPL that will occur in FY 99 are contained in Encl. 1. These tasks are not described below. In Encl. 1, tasks for PPL 8 and 9 are identified by “PL” category and sequence number. Other FY 99 tasks for which costs should also be estimated are listed in Encl. 1 below the PL tasks. Encl. 2 is a flowchart for the PPL 9 planning process.

**2.0 Background on the Formulation of the PPL 9 Planning Process.**

In order to establish a protocol for the project planning process, initial work was necessary to finalize the particulars of the PPL 9 planning program. What follows are steps or activities deemed by the P&E as necessary for development of PPL 9 and subsequent lists.

**PL 9010 – Initial Process Formulation.** A draft proposal for the PPL 9 project planning process was disseminated the week of August 24, 1998, for review and comment by Coast 2050 participants, local governments, the public, and members of the Planning and Evaluation Subcommittee (P&E).

**PL 9015 – Intermediate Process Formulation.** During a meeting of the P&E in New Orleans on September 1, 1998, the initial draft proposal was discussed and comments were made for consideration. Coast 2050 participants, local governments, and the public were invited to attend the meeting and provide their input. A revised proposal was produced based on the discussion at this meeting, which was re-distributed to the P&E the week of September 7, 1998 for advance review prior to their next meeting.

**PL 9020 – Final Process Formulation.** A P&E meeting was convened in Baton Rouge on September 11, 1998, to discuss and make further comments on the PPL 9 planning process, with a view towards establishing the FY 99 budget. Further comments were incorporated that were formulated as a result of the Technical Committee meeting held in Baton Rouge on October 8, 1998. On October 21, 1998, the Coastal Wetlands Conservation and Restoration Task Force approved the PPL 9 Planning Process and FY 99 Schedule and Budget, contingent on minor edits identified during the meeting.

### **3.0 Methodology for Development, Evaluation, Selection, and Funding of Projects on the 9<sup>th</sup> PPL.**

For tasks described in that to follow, estimated dates are shown in Encls. 1 and 2. Preliminary locations are provided for cases where there will be meetings as part of these tasks.

**3.1 Investigation Phase.** In regional nomination workshops open but not limited to the public, local governments, the State, and Federal Agencies, participants will be invited to nominate projects for consideration as candidate and demonstration projects for the 9<sup>th</sup> PPL. Each project proposed as a candidate or for demonstration purposes must support one or more Coast 2050 strategies in order to qualify for consideration in the process. It will be recommended that projects be proposed with the intention of specifically addressing Coast 2050 regional strategies recognized as being among the most important to coastal restoration.

**PL 9025 – Regional Nomination Workshops.** Four meetings, one in each of the Coast 2050 regions, (Cameron, Morgan City, and two meetings in New Orleans) will be conducted by the P&E to receive project nominations from any interested party for the 9<sup>th</sup> PPL. Invitation for these meetings will include the public, State and local government representatives, Federal Agencies, the State, the CWPPRA Workgroups<sup>1</sup>, and the Regional Planning Team (RPT) of Coast 2050.

Any number of projects will be accepted for nomination in each Coast 2050 region. After receiving nominations in each region, the focus of the regional meeting will be to engage in interactive discussions of the projects nominated. The purpose of these discussions will be to arrive at a select group of projects per region, through general consensus of meeting attendees, to carry forward for consideration in the PPL 9 planning process. The goal of each regional meeting will be to qualitatively identify up to 15 of the total number of nominee and demonstration projects that exhibit the highest potential for addressing Coast 2050 strategies. At the conclusion of each meeting, the P&E will approve the consensus-based group of up to 15 projects for the region. If necessary, the P&E will establish a 15-project cutoff of the consensus-based group of projects, in the event the number of projects recommended through discussions exceeds 15.

After finalizing the list of up to 60 projects for the four regions, no additional projects of any type will be added to the PPL 9 process after this stage. A public announcement will be mailed to present the final list of nominee and demonstration projects. A brief description and map of the projects will be included in the package.

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<sup>1</sup> Engineering Workgroup (EngWG), Environmental Workgroup (EnvWG), Economics Workgroup (EcoWG), Monitoring Workgroup (MWG), Academic Advisory Group (AAG), and real estate specialists from both the Corps and DNR.

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**PL 9030 – Nominee Project Review and Assignment.** In one scoping meeting (Lafayette) involving the public, local governments, agencies/State, Workgroups, and the RPT, the 60 nominee and demonstration projects carried forward will receive a cursory review for discussion and comment. Additionally, there will be an opportunity to address issues of interest and concern. During this review, each nominee project will be categorized by level of effort necessary to fully evaluate and construct, as either:

- ◆ non-complex, with only basic analyses<sup>2</sup> required, or
- ◆ complex, where the analysis will be considered relatively detailed in nature.<sup>3</sup>

At the completion of the meeting, there will be an attempt to assign at least one complex project to each Federal Agency and the State. Each Federal Agency and the State will adopt up to 15 complex and non-complex projects of the 60, depending on staffing, and/or other factors, for preliminary investigation-level research after this meeting. There will be an attempt to assign an equitable distribution of complex and non-complex projects to each Federal Agency and the State, depending on the number of these projects of the 60.

**PL 9040 – Scoping and Screening Phase.** For projects of the 60 nominees proposed as candidates, the purpose of this phase will be to: (1) raise technical issues of concern, (2) screen each nominee project against qualification criteria for candidate projects, and (3) identify investigations and analyses that will be necessary during the development phase.

In preparation for this phase, preliminary investigation-level research will be performed by agencies and the State that are respectively assigned to nominee projects in task PL 9035. This background work will include identification of historical trends and their causes and effects, current conditions (using existing monitoring and other available information), and forecasted no-action changes for 5, 10, 15, and 20 years into the future. Agencies of nominee projects will bring to this meeting any available schematics, photographs, hydrographs, etc., as deemed necessary to facilitate discussions.

A two- to three-day-long scoping and screening meeting (Baton Rouge) will be conducted by the P&E, with participation of the public, local governments, Workgroups, and the RPT. It is very important that at this stage all agencies and the State involve their engineering expertise in support of these meetings, to include but not be limited to engineers in the following functions/disciplines: waterways, hydraulics/coastal, geotechnical, structures, relocations, and cost estimating.

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<sup>2</sup> The categorization of non-complex being the case where there is certainty and consensus of the problems and corrective measures proposed.

<sup>3</sup> Complexity defined as the case where advanced analyses will be required to address issues of uncertainty and/or lack of consensus of: (1) the existence of either a problem and associated magnitude, and/or (2) validity or functionality of proposed corrective measures.

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In this stage, each nominee and demonstration project will be evaluated using the following criteria to determine if the project:

- ◆ appears to fall within the intent of the Act for restoration of vegetated wetlands (other benefit categories that may exist other than this should also be identified),
- ◆ is identified to have adverse effects/conflicts with existing features and/or facilities that are functioning for another genuine purpose,
- ◆ falls more within the scope of other programs/studies that are currently under way to address the stated problems,
- ◆ is technically not possible/not implementable, or against governmental policy.

By consensus of the P&E, all nominee and demonstration projects that have been favorably evaluated against these criteria will be recommended for carry-over into the next level of evaluation, which will be the candidate project phase. The P&E will then vote to determine the top complex projects non-complex projects of those projects passing the scoping and screening phase, based on the level of planning funds reasonably believed to be available by the P&E to carry out the proper development of the projects. The voting for complex and non-complex projects will occur in two separate lists, where the top 6 complex projects and top 30 non-complex projects would be respectively carried forward for development. Prior to voting, the P&E would be able to adjust the caps for projects to be carried forward, depending staffing and financial resources available under the Program. In this voting process, the sequencing of strategies of Coast 2050 will be the primary factor of consideration. Projects that pass the scoping/screening phase that are not voted among the top contenders for respective categories of non-complex/complex that year could be re-nominated in the next planning cycle for consideration.

Next, approximately 3 to 5 non-complex projects of the top 30 will be respectively assigned to each Federal Agency and the State for development. There will be an attempt to assign at least one complex project of the top 6 to each agency and the State, depending on agency/State position on their capacity for development of the complex project in consideration. During assignment of projects for development, projects initially assigned to agencies/State for background work could possibly transferred between agencies/State to level the work load of project development.<sup>4</sup>

The final list of candidate and demonstration projects will be presented to the Technical Committee (TC) for consideration and revision. The Task Force (TF) will receive a recommendation from the TC on a list of candidate and demonstration projects for the 9<sup>th</sup> PPL. The TF will review this list and provide the final list of candidate and demonstration projects for further development.

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<sup>4</sup> Coordination will be made by the State for identification of Federal Sponsoring Agencies for projects assigned to the State for development.

**3.2 Development Phase.** In this phase, project development will occur for the candidate and demonstration projects. Demonstration and Candidate projects identified as non-complex will receive traditional PPL development. Demonstration projects that are proposed should exhibit new and innovative methods and technology, and will only have to be planned, engineered, and designed -- not analyzed for cost effectiveness. Complex projects will be developed through more detailed investigations and analyses outlined prior to initiation of development.

The P&E will provide the senior management and oversight for execution of project development, with sponsoring agencies/State selecting Project Managers (PM) from within their respective organizations to oversee this work. Each PM will report their project development status on a quarterly basis in written format (email), to the Chairman of the P&E, who will work with the PMs and the P&E to ensure timely execution of project development.

**3.2.1 Complex Projects.** For complex candidate projects, there will be more detailed analyses than that of traditional project development. Steps of a Project Development Plan (PDP) will be drafted by respective agencies/State sponsoring complex projects. As part of the PDP, the PM of complex projects will: (1) organize a plan of project development<sup>5</sup> (2) develop a work schedule, (3) identify the technical resources that will be used<sup>6</sup>, and (4) estimate costs for completing tasks for development. It is expected that the PDP of a complex project would result in a development duration of about 1 to 3 years long. Therefore, it is not anticipated that complex projects where PDP execution is initiated during the PPL 9 planning cycle will be completely developed until a subsequent PPL planning cycle. Developed complex projects will be scheduled for completion and competition on a subsequent PPL to the 9<sup>th</sup> PPL.

**PL 9050 – Compilation of PDPs for Complex Projects.** In drafting the PDP, consideration will be given to employ of some or all of the following steps, which are outlined below as guidance to facilitate complex project development. Draft PDPs will be compiled within 3 months after assignment to agencies/State for development.

- ◆ **Step A.** Specify the issues, problems, and opportunities.
- ◆ **Step B.** Inventory and forecast the no-action conditions for 5, 10, 15, and 20 years into the future.
- ◆ **Step C.** State the study objectives and establish screening criteria for assessing the potential of alternative plans for meeting the objectives. Formulate alternative plans and their respective increments/scales to address the wetland problems and surrounding issues, based on public input and

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<sup>5</sup> Simplified framework for agency consideration in organizing PDPs, which was derived from the Planning Primer, IWR Report 97-R-15, dated November 1997, and the Planning Manual, IWR Report 96-R-21, dated November 1996. These documents can be downloaded from the Internet from the location: <http://www.wrsc.usace.army.mil/iwr/currpt.htm>.

<sup>6</sup> This may be in-house resources, contract services, or resources of another agency or the State.

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technical considerations.<sup>7</sup> Objectively apply screening criteria to alternative plans and/or respective increments/scales to eliminate any that do not meet this criteria.

- ◆ **Step D.** Evaluate the effects of implementing each of the alternative plans and their respective increments/scales, by accomplishing that which follows. Refer to Paragraph A.1 of the Appendix for detailed explanations of technical analyses of the PPL 9 process.
- **Step D.1** Completing/determining the required engineering, environmental compliance, and real estate analyses, with graphical layout of the results on a site map to address the problem statement,
- **Step D.2** Establish the objectives of the Operation and Maintenance (O&M) and Monitoring Plan (MP). Each agency sponsoring a project will formulate the O&M and MP objectives for their projects, and the EngWG and EcoWG will respectively refine these objectives of O&M and MP during their sessions of project review and comment. The objectives established for O&M and MP should respectively reflect only those deemed most valuable by the EngWG and EnvWG in their review of projects.
- **Step D.3** Estimate the cost of each alternative plan and increment/scale for: Project Construction (PC) with 25% contingencies, Engineering and Design (E&D), Environmental Compliance, Real Estate Requirements (RE), Permitting (PR), Project Management (PM) (COE -- \$500/yr admin., \$30,000 min. for proj. mgt., up to 6% PC, and DNR -- 2% of PC min.), Construction Supervision and Inspection (S&I), and Periodic/Annual Costs (PAC), to include: O&M and MP of the project,
- **Step D.4** Coordinate for completion of the Wetland Value Assessments (WVAs) of each alternative plan and increment/scale,
- **Step D.5** Coordinate for an economic evaluation of each alternative plan and increment/scale to develop their respective fully funded first costs, and

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<sup>7</sup> Alternative plan, as used in this planning process, is defined as a proposed system to be studied, which consists of a number of measures assembled to function either separately or in unison to accomplish one or more objectives of the project. Scale, as used in this planning process, is defined as a specific size of an alternative plan that possesses all of the same measures that function either separately or in unison to accomplish one or more objectives of the project. Increments, as used in this planning process, are defined as respective constant-scale configurations of an alternative plan, that possesses varying combinations of measures of those comprehensively contained in the alternative plan, which function either separately or in unison to accomplish one or more objectives of the project. The criteria to identify the difference between alternative plans lies in the difference of fundamental strategy, or method of approach, that these plans respectively employ to accomplish the project objectives.

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- **Step D.6** Execute incremental cost effective analyses for each alternative and respective increment/scale.
- ◆ **Step E.** Perform a comparison of the results from Step D for the suite of alternative plans considered to arrive at the alternative plan and increment/scale for that candidate project that is the most incrementally cost effective<sup>8</sup>.
- ◆ **Step F.** Select a recommended plan for the candidate project, based on the study objectives and any other factors, such as issues, support for specific alternative plans, etc. Rationale will be provided for selection of the recommended plan.

**PL 9055 – Review and Comment of Draft PDPs for Complex Projects.** Draft PDPs of complex projects will be disseminated by the PMs of complex projects to the P&E, Workgroups, and the RPT for review and comment. Written comments will be sent by reviewers to the respective project PMs for resolution and revision of the PDPs. Comments not incorporated by PMs in the final project PDPs will be resolved in a written reply to reviewers.

**PL 9056 – Draft PDP Discussions for Complex Projects.** Reviewers and PMs of complex projects will convene in up to 3 meetings (Baton Rouge), as required, to discuss resolutions to comments of draft PDPs and to negotiate the final format of the PDPs. Also, these meetings will be conducted to negotiate budgeting of the PDP tasks in the current and out fiscal years. Depending on the number of complex project PDPs, tasks of the PDPs may have to be spread among several FYs in order to not exceed the unallocated level of planning funds available.<sup>9</sup>

**PL 9057 – PDP Finalization for Complex Projects.** In this task, each agency/State will finalize their PDP based on the results of task PL 9056. Finalized PDPs will be disseminated to members of the P&E for formal approval, funding, and management oversight during PDP execution.

**PL 9060 – Development of Complex Projects.** The Task Force has reserved about \$740,000, as identified as being available in FY 99 for this task, which will be provided to agencies/State as necessary based on the requirements of approved PDPs that are finalized and are ready for execution. This is shown in the “totals” column of Encl. 1.

The PM of each project will prepare work products of the PDP for review and comment, based on input of the PM’s technical resources. Work products from each step of the studies will receive review and comment by designated Workgroups and the RPT. The focus of review and comment will be to ensure accuracy, consistency, and correction

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<sup>8</sup> This is defined as that plan having the lowest incremental fully funded first cost above the next smaller plan in cost, in the sequence of plans of cost per unit benefit. The program “IWR Plan” was developed for this purpose by the Institute for Water Resources. IWR Plan may be downloaded from the Internet from the site: <http://www.pmcl.com/iwrplan/Download1.htm>.

<sup>9</sup> Refer to PL 9060 for the level of funds available in FY 99 for complex project development.

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of errors, and omissions. Table 1 presents a matrix of work responsibilities that describes the proponents for producing/refining (PR) products, and reviewing/commenting (RC) on products. All review comments must be resolved for the latest task of the executed PDP under review, prior to the PM of the complex project initiating the next step of the PDP.

**Table 1  
Matrix of Work Responsibilities**

	Sponsoring Agency	EngWG	EnvWG	EcoWG	MWG	AAG	RPT
Step A	PR	RC	RC			RC	RC
Step B	PR	RC	RC			RC	RC
Step C	PR	RC	RC		RC	RC	RC
Step D							
Step D.1	PR	RC					RC
Step D.2	PR	RC			PR/RC		RC
Step D.3	PR	RC			RC		RC
Step D.4			PR/RC		RC	PR/RC	RC
Step D.5				PR/RC			RC
Step D.6	PR	RC	RC	RC		RC	RC
Step E	PR	RC	RC	RC		RC	RC
Step F	PR	RC	RC	RC		RC	RC

For Step C and Steps D.1 through D.3, there will be an initial EngWG review/comment of the work products for recommendations on refining the engineering aspects. After this, there will be review/comment by the EnvWG to recommend refinements to optimize the wetland benefits. The refined work products will then receive final review/comment from the EngWG to complete the final work products.

Each sponsoring agency will prepare a project development report to document and present the results of each step of the study.<sup>10</sup> The technical data, information, analyses, and designs, for the project development steps will be placed in appendices of the report. An executive summary of the report will summarize the recommended plan, its fully funded first cost and the average annual benefits. Members of the P&E will review draft versions of the reports and provide written comments to PMs of these projects resolution and report finalization.

**3.2.2 Non-Complex Projects.** The tasks shown below will only be necessary at a minimum, for the development of non-complex projects. Other pertinent aspects not described below that are necessary for development of certain non-complex projects should also be completed on a case by case basis. It is expected that traditional project development for non-complex projects will be completed within a year. This is described in Steps D.1 through D.5 of Task PL 9050, which are shown by task for non-complex projects in the following.

<sup>10</sup> Guidance available in the Planning Manual, pp. 230-237.



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**PL 9160 – Development of Project Information for WVA (Non-Complex Projects).** Each sponsoring agency/State will develop project information for WVA and provide to EnvWG Chairman in advance of task PL 9063.

**PL 9161 – Develop Designs and Cost Estimates for Non-Complex Projects.** Each sponsoring agency/State will develop designs and cost estimates and provide to EngWG Chairman in advance of task PL 9062.

**PL 9162 – EngWG Project Review.** This consists of: (1) an initial review of designs and cost estimates to ensure accuracy, consistency, and identification of errors, and omissions, and (2) a second review after the EnvWG meets to make suggestions for improvements after the initial review of the EngWG is complete.<sup>11</sup> This will be up to 10 meetings (Baton Rouge). Additionally, there will be a joint meeting with the EnvWG to determine longevity/sustainability and risk/uncertainty of the projects (Baton Rouge).

**PL 9163 – EnvWG Project Review and Evaluation of Benefits.** This consists of: (1) an initial review of project features after the initial review of the EngWG, and (2) a second meeting after the EngWG meets to complete the WVAs. This will be up to 10 meetings (Baton Rouge) and up to 20 field trips. Additionally, there will be a joint meeting with the EngWG to determine longevity/sustainability and risk/uncertainty of the projects (Baton Rouge).

**PL 9164 – Preparation of Project Fact Sheets.** Each sponsoring agency/State will prepare project fact sheets to summarize the results of project development.

**PL 9165 – EcoWG Project Evaluations.** The EcoWG will convene to perform economic evaluations for the candidate projects. This will not be necessary for demonstration projects.

**PL 9166 – Project Fact Sheet Submittal.** Each sponsoring agency/State will submit their project fact sheets to the Chairman of the P&E for presentation of the projects to the public.

**PL 9065 – Public Results Presentation.** The P&E, with the coordination and support of the RPT, will present the projects to each of the Coast 2050 regions to solicit public input. Brief summaries of the developed candidate and demonstration projects will be assembled and delivered via public notice to the Coast 2050 regional participants for this input, which will be used in the project ranking process.

**PL 9070 – Candidate Project Ranking.** Based on the CWPPRA ranking criteria, each candidate project will be ranked against the others, with the results of the ranking presented to the P&E. At this stage, the P&E will make the determination for each candidate project whether it is systemic or non-systemic. This will be done through facsimile voting. Refer to Paragraph A.2 of the Appendix for detailed explanations of project ranking for the PPL 9 process.

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<sup>11</sup> See Steps D.1 through D.3 of task PL 9050, for details of the recommended contents of engineering and design work for non-complex projects.

**3.3 Selection and Funding Phase.** Following the Development Phase, the P&E, TC, and TF will convene successively to produce the 9<sup>th</sup> PPL. This will occur in a timeline to facilitate the development of the annual publication of the State's *Coastal Wetlands Conservation and Restoration plan*, for its submittal by June 1<sup>st</sup> of the calendar year to the State Legislature for approval.

**PL 9075 – P&E Recommendation for Project Selection and Funding.** The P&E will meet (New Orleans) to review and discuss the results of the ranking to formulate a recommendation for selection and funding of a prioritized list of projects on the 9<sup>th</sup> PPL.

**PL 9080 – TC Recommendation for Project Selection and Funding.** The list of recommended projects for selection and funding will then be presented at one Technical Committee (TC) meeting (Baton Rouge) for their consideration and revision.

**PL 9085 – TF Selection and Funding of the 9<sup>th</sup> PPL.** The Task Force (TF) will receive a recommendation from the TC in a meeting (Lafayette), for a list of projects for the 9<sup>th</sup> PPL. The TF will review this list and determine the final prioritized list of projects for selection and funding.

#### **4.0 Documentation and Reporting of the 9<sup>th</sup> PPL.**

**PL 9090 – PPL 9 Report Development.** The entire planning process up through selection and funding of the 9<sup>th</sup> PPL will be documented in a 9<sup>th</sup> PPL report.

**PL 9095 – Upward Submittal of the PPL 9 Report.** This report will be submitted to the Assistant Secretary of the Army (ASA) for Civil Works (CW).

**PL 9100 – Submission of the PPL 9 Report to Congress.** The report will be reviewed and submitted to Congress by the ASA (CW).