January 2010
Cost figures as of: December 2016

LaBranche East Marsh Creation (PO-75)

Project Status

Approved Date: 2010 **Project Area:** 931 acres
Approved Funds: $2.57 M **Total Est. Cost:** $32.3 M
Net Benefit After 20 Years: 715 acres
Status: Engineering and Design
Project Type: Marsh Creation
PPL #: 19

Location

The project features are located between Lake Pontchartrain and I-10 in St. Charles Parish, Louisiana. It is bounded on the west by the Fall Canal and the Bayou LaBranche Wetland Creation Project (PO-17) and the east by a pipeline canal.

Problems

Dredging of access and flotation canals for the construction of I-10 and the Illinois Central Railroad resulted in increased salinity and altered hydrology in the area that exacerbated the conversion of wetland vegetation into shallow open water bodies.

Restoration Strategy

The project's primary goal is to restore marsh that has been converted to open water. Project implementation will result in an increase of wildlife and fisheries habitat, acreage and diversity, along with improving water quality. In addition, the project will provide a storm buffer protection to I-10, the region's primary westward hurricane evacuation route, and complement hurricane protection measures in the area. Project features consist of the creation of 729 acres of marsh and the nourishment of 202 acres of existing marsh using dedicated dredging from Lake Pontchartrain. In addition, 10,000 linear feet of tidal creeks will be created. The marsh creation area will have a target elevation the same as average healthy marsh for this region. Plans are to place the dredge material in the target area with the use of low level, non-continuous retention dikes along the edge of the project area allowing overtopping of material to nourish the marsh fringe. Vegetative plantings will be utilized in the areas deemed most critical by the project team. Successful wetland restoration in the immediate area (PO-17) clearly demonstrates the suitability and stability of soil and material availability from a sustainable borrow area.

Progress to Date

This project is on Priority Project List 19. Surveying and Geotechnical scopes of work and plans are prepared.

A vulnerable interstate evacuation route, I-10, sits behind an open body of water where marsh once flourished.

For more project information, please contact:

Federal Sponsor:
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Alexandria, LA
(318) 473-7756

Local Sponsor:
Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority
Baton Rouge, LA
(225) 342-4736

LaBranche East Marsh Creation (PO-75)

Tidal Creek *
Marsh Creation *
Marsh Nourishment *
Project Boundary
*denotes proposed features

USGS
science for a changing world

Louisiana
Project Location
N

0.1 0 0.1 0.2 Kilometers
0.1 0 0.1 0.2 Miles

Map Produced by:
U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Geological Survey
National Wetlands Research Center
Coastal Restoration Field Station
Baton Rouge, La.

Background Imagery:
2008 Digital Orthophoto Quarter Quadrangle

Map Date: June 3, 2010
Map ID: USGS-NWRC 2010-11-0021
Data accurate as of: February 5, 2010