A COMMUNITY GUIDE TO COASTAL RESTORATION

RESTORE
THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER DELTA

COMMUNITY GUIDE TO COASTAL RESTORATION

Many in Louisiana are familiar with the land loss crisis the state faces. We often hear that a football field of land is lost every 100 minutes. Such a significant challenge comes with many different solutions, which can quickly become confusing to anyone interested in supporting coastal restoration efforts. That is why Restore the Mississippi River Delta has compiled this ***Community Guide to Coastal Restoration***—a quick reference guide to help the average person understand the complicated web of decision-makers and funding sources involved in the restoration of our coast. If you want to learn more, you can find more details on our website ***MississippiRiverDelta.org/handbook*** along with up-to-date contact information.

THIS HANDBOOK BELONGS TO:

Contents

Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA)

Prior to 2005, Louisiana's coastal protection and restoration efforts were handled by several local and state governmental entities with limited budgets and little to no coordination. As a result of the devastation of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the federal government agreed to provide financial support and expertise to help address Louisiana's coastal crisis. For this assistance, the federal government requested there be one central authority that would represent the state and be accountable for oversight of all activities and funds. This authority would also have a coordinated plan of action with clear goals and achievable objectives.

Louisiana responded to this request by creating the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (**CPRA**). The CPRA is the single state entity with the authority to develop, articulate, implement, and enforce a comprehensive Louisiana Coastal Master Plan. This plan would use the best available science to reduce tropical storm surge flood impact (note: not from rainfall), restore our natural resources, build land, and secure Louisiana's coast now and for future generations. In addition to the Coastal Master Plan, the CPRA is also responsible for producing an Annual Plan for legislative approval.

The CPRA board must approve a final version of both the Coastal Master Plan (updated every six years) and the Annual Plan (updated every year) before submitting it for final approval by the Louisiana Legislature. (See Chapters 3 and 4 for more details on these plans.)

CPRA BOARD

The Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority Board members serve at the pleasure of the Governor and represent various agencies and geographic areas in the pursuit of coordinated coastal restoration activities.

Duties of the CPRA Board:

- Represent the state's position in policy relative to the protection, conservation, enhancement, and restoration of the coastal area of the state;
- Oversee the Coastal Protection and Restoration Trust Fund;
- Enforce compliance with the Coastal Master Plan; and
- Develop a master plan and an annual plan for integrated coastal protection.

The CPRA Board includes the:

- Executive Assistant to the Governor for Coastal Activities (serves as Chair of the Board);
- Secretaries from the Departments of Natural Resources, Transportation and Development, Wildlife and Fisheries, Environmental Quality, and Economic Development;
- Commissioners from the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Louisiana Division of Administration, and Louisiana Department of Insurance;
- Representatives from the following basins: Teche/Vermilion, Barataria, Terrebonne, Breton Sound, Mississippi Delta, Pontchartrain, Atchafalaya, and Calcasieu/Sabine;
- Chairman of the Governor's Advisory Commission on Coastal Protection, Restoration and Conservation;
- Director of the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness;
- Senate President (or designee); and
- Speaker of the House (or designee).

Coastal Protection and Restoration Fund (Coastal Trust Fund)

The **Coastal Trust Fund** is a constitutionally protected trust fund that finances projects and programs that preserve and restore Louisiana's coastal area. The state Constitution requires that money placed into the fund be spent on projects in—or be "not inconsistent with"—the **Louisiana Coastal Master Plan** (more details in chapter 3). The Coastal Trust Fund receives money from state mineral revenues, the federal government, various settlements related to the BP oil spill, and other sources. These funds are made available to the CPRA for "the purposes of integrated coastal protection, including but not limited to, coastal wetlands conservation, coastal restoration, hurricane protection, or for infrastructure directly impacted by coastal wetlands losses."

Though the coastal fund is protected in the Louisiana state constitution, if the state budget experiences a mid-year budget deficit, it can trigger a potential drawdown of a small portion of the Coastal Trust Fund (and other state dedicated funds). Though the funds are otherwise protected and dedicated, the law allows a rededication of five percent to balance a mid-year statewide budget deficit. The Governor can request up to five percent, and the legislature would then vote to approve or deny the request.

On the plus side, when a state budget surplus exists, the Coastal Trust Fund is one of only a handful of funds (including the "Rainy Day" Fund, Retirement, and Transportation Trust Fund) that may receive surplus dollars. **Surplus dollars** are considered non-recurring—or "one-time" revenue—that may not be used to bolster the general operating budget. Surplus dollars directed to the Coastal Trust Fund allow the CPRA to speed up the implementation of projects from the Louisiana Coastal Master Plan.

Louisiana's Comprehensive Master Plan for a Sustainable Coast, Louisiana Coastal Master Plan

Following the devastating hurricanes of 2005, the Louisiana Legislature enacted several significant changes which altered the trajectory for Louisiana's coast. Prior to 2005, coastal restoration and conservation fell under the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, and hurricane protection/levees were a responsibility of the Louisiana Department of Transportation.

The legislature decided that protection and restoration could no longer happen in isolation, and the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) was formed. Under this new state authority, the Louisiana Legislature also required that the CPRA develop a comprehensive plan for the protection and restoration of Louisiana's coast to be created, so in 2007 the first **Coastal Master Plan** was released.

The 2007 plan was largely conceptual, utilizing previous studies such as the Louisiana Coastal Area Study, Coast 2020, and others. Since the plan must be updated regularly, the 2012 version delivered greater detail, thanks to a longer planning period and advances in technology and science. The 2012 plan was a balance of 50% restoration projects and 50% protection projects. It proposed spending about $1 billion a year in 2012 funds for the next 50 years. The legislature deliberately chose fifty years and $50 billion as an aspirational but attainable goal, but the plan was formulated so that whatever funding was available, the most impactful projects within the budget would be prioritized.

The 2017 plan was built upon the 2012 plan, retained the 50/50 split between protection and restoration and kept the 50 year and $50 billion strategy. Two of the most considerable improvements for the 2017 plan were a more refined timeline for project implementation over the next 50 years and an updated projection of climate change

scenarios used to model, select, and prioritize the suite of projects. Climate projections in 2017 were updated from 2012 based upon the latest climate science. As a result, projects in 2017 had their performance measured against a much higher rate of future sea-level rise predictions. The 2023 plan will also use the latest range of sea-level rise scenarios from the international scientific literature, which will likely be different, but not necessarily worse than in 2017. Additionally, the 2023 plan will use model improvements to better analyze a more robust range of project performances measured against the uncertainties inherent in all attempts to predict the future.

The 2017 plan included 120 initially selected projects suggested by the public, agencies and local governments, with four additional projects added after public input during the comment period. The master plan projects included were chosen based on their ability to meet the two primary goals of the plan: 1. build and maintain land and 2. reduce future hurricane flood risk to communities. Additionally, projects were evaluated for five primary objectives within those goals: flood protection, natural processes, coastal habitat, cultural heritage and the working coast.

The development of the 2017 plan also saw greater community engagement thanks in part to the "Coastal Conversations" local meeting series, the interactive Master Plan Viewer tool and the partnership with the State Library that ensured copies of the plan in every Louisiana public library.

After 2017, legislation passed to allow 6 years between plans, so development for the 2023 plan began immediately after the unanimous support of the 2017 plan in the Louisiana Legislature. It is expected the 2023 plan will see advances in model accuracy and include more in-depth analysis of ecosystem response to proposed projects. The plan is expected to be viewed in draft form by the end of 2022, with public comment and a vote by the Louisiana Legislature in the Spring of 2023.

GEOGRAPHY

The official Louisiana Coastal Zone defines the scope of where the CPRA's projects and authority reside. This includes 20 coastal parishes from the Texas to Mississippi borders. Detailed "parish fact sheets" for each are available online.

STATE ENTITIES INVOLVED

The Governor, the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, the CPRA Board, the Governor's Office of Coastal Activities, GOCA Board, House and Senate Natural Resources and Transportation Committees, Full Legislature

FUNDING

There are 40+ different but generally small, restricted or shrinking sources of funding on the local, state, and federal levels. The exception is funding flowing from the legal settlement of the *Deepwater Horizon* Disaster. Seven to eight billion dollars from *Deepwater Horizon* will be sufficient funding for the restoration part of the plan through about 2023. Still, full funding for the storm risk reduction projects in the plan will depend upon as yet unidentified sources of revenue, which might include future Congressional appropriations. Securing a steady source of long-term revenue for risk reduction and restoration after 2032 will be critical to the plan's success. Further, given the accelerating rate of sea-level rise ahead, money spent sooner will be more effective than money spent later. One billion dollars a year is not a limit on what could be spent effectively.

Fiscal Year Annual Plan

The Coastal Protection and Restoration Board, with the CPRA's guidance, is required by a 2009 Louisiana law to produce a plan annually allocating funding for restoration and protection projects for three fiscal years and detailing progress since the last annual plan. (The State's fiscal calendar runs from July 1 to June 30.)

Known as the **Annual Plan**, the document includes an inventory, or list, of the restoration and protection projects that have been completed. The annual plan also includes projects in the process of planning, engineering, construction, and permitting, including project schedules, funding sources, and budgets. This information is included for the next three fiscal years. In the Annual Plan, you can also find a list of current CPRA board members, summaries of work completed the prior year, highlights of certain projects, and breakdowns in spending.

It is essential to note the plan is only an authorization or approval to spend money on projects outlined but is not an actual appropriation (or commitment) of those dollars.

The plan is typically released at the beginning of the calendar year, presented to the CPRA Board in draft form, then is vetted through public meetings. The CPRA board then approves and sends the revised version to the Louisiana Legislature in its regular spring session, where it receives approval from four committees: House and Senate Natural Resources and House and Senate Transportation. The Annual Plan then receives an up or down vote by the full legislature, and because it is presented as a resolution, it is not subject to line-item changes, meaning lawmakers cannot strike any one particular project out of the plan or even add a project.

GEOGRAPHY

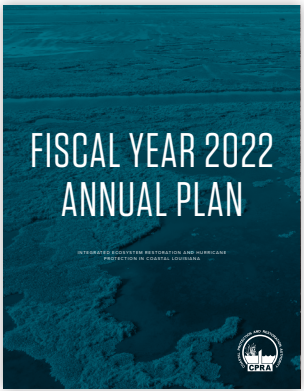
20 coastal parishes from the Texas to Mississippi borders

STATE ENTITIES INVOLVED

The Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, the Governor's Office of Coastal Activities, House and Senate Natural Resources and Transportation Committees, Full Legislature

FUNDING

For Fiscal Year 2022, the CPRA has asked to spend $877 million, which increases to $1 billion in upcoming years, most of which is spent on construction. With COVID-19 impacts and a decrease in the oil and gas economy (which produces funding for our state's coastal program), there may be a decline in funding this year (2021) and in upcoming years.



CPRA's Nonstructural Program

To protect communities from coastal flooding, we must take a "multiple lines of defense" approach. Thus, in addition to structural projects, the CPRA recommends a comprehensive nonstructural program as part of the strategy to reduce flood risk for Louisiana citizens. Nonstructural projects include elevating buildings, floodproofing structures, and voluntary acquisition.

The Flood Risk and Resilience Program focuses on increasing flood risk awareness, implementing nonstructural projects, and supporting policies that promote greater resilience across the coast. These policy measures are crucial to promote wise and forward-thinking development in Louisiana's coastal zone and to protect homes and businesses today and in the years ahead. Through the Master Plan, CPRA has developed a risk reduction strategy that coordinates state resources and prioritizes high-risk areas. In this strategy, parishes play a lead role in implementing projects and selecting specific mitigated structures while prioritizing those that are low to moderate income.

An example of a non-structural measure is an elevated home.

CHAPTER 5

NONSTRUCTURAL RISK REDUCTION PROJECTS IN THE 2017 COASTAL MASTER PLAN

Several nonstructural risk reduction project types have been evaluated for use on residential buildings, including single-family, multi-family, and manufactured homes, as well as non-residential buildings, including commercial, industrial, and institutional structures.

- **Floodproofing** of non-residential structures is recommended in areas with projected 100-year flood depths of 3 feet or less so they can be resistant to flood damage.
- **Elevation** of residential structures is recommended in areas with a projected 100-year flood depth of between 3 and 14 feet so that their lowest floors are higher than projected flood depths.
- **Voluntary Acquisition** of residential structures (without the use of eminent domain) is recommended in areas where projected 100-year flood depths make elevation or floodproofing infeasible and where residential structures would need to be elevated higher than 14 feet.

Residents can view their community's anticipated land change, flood risk and impacts with the CPRA Master Plan Data Viewer. This online tool provides residents with access to the state's best information about how Louisiana's coast may change in the future, as well as resources to make communities and properties safer. Information includes future land change, storm surge flood risk, coastal vegetation, and social vulnerability. Also included are detailed factsheets on the state's proposed restoration, structural protection, and nonstructural risk reduction projects to help make communities safer.

*Visit us at **MississippiRiverDelta.org/handbook** for additional details along with up-to-date contact information.*

Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA)

(CWPPRA or "Breaux Act")

The CWPPRA program was authorized in 1990 and provides funds for planning and implementing wetland restoration and protection projects in coastal Louisiana. The program advances project planning and construction on an annual cycle with Priority Project Lists (PPLs) and has authorized over 200 projects. Over 100 projects have been constructed, creating over 100,000 acres and enhancing over 350,000 acres of wetland habitat. CWPPRA projects are operated and maintained for 20 years.

GEOGRAPHY

Projects are proposed and selected via four regions in CWPPRA:

- **Region 1** – Pontchartrain Basin;
- **Region 2** – Barataria and Breton Sound Basins;
- **Region 3** – Teche/Vermilion, Atchafalaya, and Terrebonne Basins;
- **Region 4** – Calcasieu/Sabine and Mermentau Basins.

There are also Coastwide and Demonstration project categories.

The CWPPRA Caminada Back Barrier Marsh will benefit 900 acres of marsh.

FEDERAL AND STATE AGENCIES INVOLVED

The CWPPRA Program is managed by the CWPPRA Task Force, whose members vote to advance projects. The Task Force is composed of the State of Louisiana, represented by the Governor's Office of Coastal Activities, and five federal agencies: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration - National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA-NMFS; aka, NOAA Fisheries), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). The Army Corps is the administrator of the program. Projects are developed from the parish level up, and various local stakeholders and experts are often involved in project development.

FUNDING

CWPPRA's funding source is the Sport Fish Restoration & Boating Safety Trust Fund, which provides approximately $30 million - $80 million per year. CWPPRA project planning activities are 100% federally funded. Once a project is approved, cost-sharing is 85% Federal and 15% non-Federal. The local sponsor is the State on all CWPPRA projects.

HOW TO SUBMIT AND/OR SUPPORT A PROJECT

Community stakeholders can work with CWPPRA representatives from CPRA or Federal agencies to propose a project. Local involvement and support are important to the CWPPRA process. All projects must be consistent with the Louisiana Coastal Master Plan, and most projects are in the $20-$35 million range (except for demonstration projects).

Natural Resources Damage Assessment (NRDA)

When an oil spill occurs, natural resources like fish, birds, and marshes may be damaged or destroyed. A natural resource damage assessment (or **"NRDA"**) is a process focused on figuring out what those injuries are, coming up with a plan to repair those injuries, and then fixing them. This includes compensating the public for the lack of access to the resources while unusable (e.g., no recreational fishing or beach access). The NRDA process resulting from the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill is managed by a group of federal and state representatives called 'trustees.'

DEEPWATER HORIZON DAMAGE ASSESSMENT

In April 2016, a federal court approved a settlement among the United States, five Gulf states, and British Petroleum (BP) due to the April 2010 explosion that resulted in 11 deaths and the largest marine oil spill in the history of the petroleum industry. Under that settlement, BP agreed to pay up to $8.8 billion for natural resource damages pursuant to the Oil Pollution Act. Louisiana's Trustee Implementation Group receives $5 billion to be used for ecosystem restoration through 2031. Of that, $4.3 billion will be used to restore and conserve habitat, while the remaining funds will be used to replenish and protect living coastal and marine resources ($343 million); for monitoring, adaptive management, and administration oversight ($258 million); to provide and enhance recreational opportunities ($60 million), and to restore water quality ($20 million).

WHAT IS THE TRUSTEE IMPLEMENTATION GROUP?

The Louisiana Trustee Implementation Group (Louisiana TIG)—a group of federal and state representatives—currently manages the Natural Resource Restoration Program in Louisiana. When making decisions, the TIG must reach consensus, which means that both the state trustees (who must agree as a group) and the federal trustees (who must also agree as a group) must agree to the decision.

Members (State):
- LA Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority
- LA Oil Spill Coordinator's Office
- LA Department of Environmental Quality
- LA Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
- LA Department of Natural Resources

Members (Federal):
- U.S. Department of Interior
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Department of Agriculture

HOW MUCH DOES LOUISIANA GET?

Since the spill in 2010, over $1 billion has been committed to Louisiana. There is over $3.5 billion remaining for Louisiana. $6.7 billion remaining broadly.

In 2019, the LA TIG approved several restoration projects totaling over $900 million in restoration planning and implementation funds.

Approved Projects in Louisiana include:

- Lake Hermitage Marsh Creation
- Oyster Cultch Placement
- Oyster Hatchery
- Louisiana Outer Coast Restoration – North Breton Island
- Louisiana Outer Coast Restoration – Caillou Lake Headlands Barrier Island Restoration
- Lake Outer Coast Restoration – Chenier Ronquille
- Louisiana Outer Coast Restoration – Shell Island (East and West Lobes) Barrier Island Restoration
- Shoreline protection at Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve
- Terrebonne Basin Ridge and Marsh Creation, Bayou Terrebonne Increment
- Barataria Basin Ridge and Marsh Creation – Spanish Pass Increment
- Queen Bess Island Restoration Project
- Lake Borgne Marsh Creation – One Increment
- Rabbit Island Restoration Project
- Large Scale Marsh Creation in Barataria Bay
- Louisiana Statewide Artificial Reefs
- Pointe-aux-Chenes Wildlife Management Area - Island Road Fishing Piers
- Atchafalaya Delta Wildlife Management Area - Campground Improvements
- Middle Pearl Boat Launch
- Atchafalaya Delta Wildlife Management Area - Access Improvements
- Pass-a-Loutre Wildlife Management Area - Crevasse Access Improvements
- Pass-a-Loutre Wildlife Management Area Campground Improvements
- Pointe-aux-Chenes Wildlife Management Area Recreational Use Enhancement
- Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge Piers and Signage
- Elmer's Island Access Project
- Bayou Segnette State Park Improvements
- Cypremort Point State Park Improvements
- Grand Isle State Park Improvements
- Terrebonne HNC Island Restoration

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (**NFWF**) is a nonprofit organization created by Congress in 1984 "to protect and restore fish and wildlife and their habitats." The organization funds a wide variety of conservation projects across the country, leveraging public funds with private investment dollars. NFWF is governed by a Board of Directors, which consists of 30 members approved by the Secretary of the Interior.

In 2013, NFWF established the Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund per the terms of two plea agreements relative to certain criminal cases against BP and Transocean following the 2010 *Deepwater Horizon* explosion and oil spill. NFWF is the administrator of $2.54 billion for projects that benefit natural resources harmed by the oil spill; Louisiana has been allocated $1.27 billion out of that bucket.

According to the US Department of Justice plea agreement, Louisiana-designated funds can only be used on barrier island restoration and sediment diversion projects along the Mississippi and Atchafalaya rivers. NFWF gives consideration to Louisiana's Coastal Master Plan and the Louisiana Coastal Area Mississippi River Hydrodynamic and Delta Management Study.

NFWF Gulf Benefit dollars had a very well-defined payout schedule as part of that plea agreement. Following consultation with state and federal resource agencies, NFWF has awarded nearly $1.5 billion in funding from the Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund since 2013. NFWF will continue to obligate funds appropriately and in accordance with the plea agreement.

The number of awards from the Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund in Louisiana now stands at 13, with a total current value of more than $606 million. These projects are designed to restore, protect, and

enhance natural and living resources:

- Terrebonne Basin Barrier Island and Beach Nourishment Construction
- Mississippi River Mid-Basin Sediment Diversion Program Management
- Adaptive Management: Louisiana River Diversions and Barrier Islands
- Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion: Engineering and Design
- Increase Atchafalaya Flow to Terrebonne: Planning, Engineering and Design
- Caminada Beach and Dune Increment Engineering, Design and Construction
- Lower Mississippi Sediment Diversions: Planning
- East Timbalier Island: Engineering in Design

NFWF conducts one project cycle per year, beginning with a project review cycle each spring in consultation with state and federal resource agencies, including NOAA and FWS.

NFWF's Caminada Headland restoration, shown here during construction in November 2013, restored over 13 miles of beach.

Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States (RESTORE) Act

The Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act of 2012—better known as the "**RESTORE Act**"—was enacted on July 6, 2012.

The RESTORE Act creates a Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund (RTF), which receives 80% of any Clean Water Act (CWA) civil and administrative penalties paid by BP and other companies responsible for the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill. In total, more than $5.3 billion will flow into the RTF.

There are five different pots of money, each with their own regulations and decision-making structures. The first three are commonly called pots or buckets one, two and three. Funding flows through the RESTORE Act via three pots – Pot 1 evenly distributed 35 percent of RESTORE funding directly to the Gulf states. Pot 2 allocates 30 percent of funding to ecosystem restoration projects selected by the RESTORE Council – each of the five may compete for this money. Pot 3 distributes 30 percent of funding to the Gulf states based on an oil spill impact allocation formula. The remaining 5 percent is divided equally between NOAA to establish the Gulf Coast Ecosystem, Restoration, Science, Observation, Monitoring, and Technology program and to establish Centers of Excellence for research in a variety of environmental and engineering fields related to the Gulf Coast.

Over 2 billion dollars has been committed in the Gulf States across all pots so far, but there are policy limits to how much money can be expended in a given year.

Louisiana has committed to using all of its Pot 1 and Pot 3 money on the Coastal Master Plan. Via Pot 2, Louisiana has received an additional $52.2 million to fund coastal restoration projects included in the RESTORE Council's Funded Priorities List, including marsh creation, hydrologic restoration, and beach nourishment projects.

Louisiana funded projects:

- West Grand Terre Beach Nourishment and Stabilization
- Golden Triangle Marsh Creation
- Biloxi Marsh Living Shoreline
- Lowermost Mississippi River Management
- Mississippi River Reintroduction into Maurepas Swamp

Direct Component (Pot 1*) 35%

- Sent to the five Gulf states in equal amounts
- Can be used for "economic and ecological restoration"
- States are required to complete a multi-year implementation plan to be approved by the Department of Treasury before receiving funds
- In Louisiana, this money is being used to fund the Coastal Master Plan
- Louisiana receives $373 million

Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (Pot 2) 30% + 50% of the interest

- Money goes to a Gulf-wide council composed of federal officials and the governors (or their representatives) from the five Gulf states.
- Funds are used to carry out a science-based plan to restore and protect Gulf natural resources
- Process continues through 2021 - $302 million in grants will be available. As part of the ongoing process to select programs and projects for funding under Pot 2, the RESTORE Council staff has posted 24 proposals submitted by seven RESTORE Council members.

Spill Impact Component (Pot 3*) 30%

- Money goes to each state based on the impacts of the oil
- Can be used for both economic and ecological restoration
- States must submit an expenditure plan which is approved by the council before funds are distributed – SEP approved in 2017
- Louisiana gets the bulk of this money because of the impacts - $553 million

Restoration Science Program (Pot 4) 2.5% + 25% of the interest

- Funds go to an NOAA-led program
- Supports research, observation, and monitoring of the long-term sustainability of the Gulf ecosystem and fisheries
- Funding priority is given to integrated and long-term projects
- $133 million

Center of Excellence (Pot 5) 2.5% + 25% of the interest

- Each state's "Center of Excellence"
- States are to provide grant funding to NGOs and consortia in the Gulf Region to establish "Centers of Excellence" that focus on science, technology and monitoring
- Louisiana's Center of Excellence is The Water Institute of the Gulf
    - To receive approximately $26.6 million over 15 years related to Louisiana Coastal Master Plan research
    - In 2017, 13 projects at $4 million for research and collaborative awards as well as graduate studentships
    - May 2020, awarded $3.2 million

**Pots 1 and 3 - The State of Louisiana has elected to combine these two plans into a single document – the "RESTORE Plan" – which is guided by the state's Comprehensive Master Plan for a Sustainable Coast. Approved in June 2018 for $20 million.*

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Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA)

The Gulf of Mexico is home to approximately 98% of the country's offshore oil and gas production. It is the most developed oil and gas infrastructure in the country, and according to the US Department of the Interior's (DOI's) Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), it contains the highest levels of undiscovered, technically recoverable oil and gas resources of any region in the US. The leasing of these offshore areas for oil and gas extraction and production is governed primarily by two laws: the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, which broadly controls oil and gas leasing throughout the U.S. outer continental shelf; and the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006, which relates specifically to leasing in the Gulf.

GEOGRAPHY

BOEM divides the Gulf into three planning areas: Eastern, Central, and Western. Most of the oil and gas development has taken place in the Central and Western Gulf planning areas because there are more oil and gas resources in those areas (as compared with the Eastern Gulf).

WHAT DOES GOMESA DO?

Revenue Sharing
On December 20, 2006, the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (**GOMESA**) was signed into law as part of The Tax Relief and Health Care Act of 2006. GOMESA created a revenue-sharing model for oil and gas producing states in the Gulf of Mexico. Under this act, Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas (producing states) receive a portion of the revenue generated from oil and

gas production, such as leasing revenues offshore in the Gulf of Mexico. The funds are intended to mitigate the demands placed on infrastructure and natural resources associated with oil and gas production on the Gulf Coast states that host that energy production.

In Louisiana, GOMESA provides a consistent source of funding to address the land loss crisis. To date, Louisiana officials have made clear commitments to using the state's share of GOMESA funding for implementing the Coastal Master Plan. Louisiana voters have constitutionally dedicated all future revenues from GOMESA to the Coastal Trust Fund to be used exclusively for restoration and protection activities. In the 2020 fiscal year, Louisiana received a total of $155,718,470 which was divided between the state and the coastal parishes.

GOMESA also directs a portion of revenue to the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which invests earnings from offshore oil and gas leasing to safeguard natural areas, water resources, cultural heritage and provide recreation opportunities across America.

In 2017, Phase II of GOMESA expanded the oil and gas leases from which revenue sharing was required. This resulted in increased revenues for the Gulf Coast states, including the State of Louisiana. It also increased the revenue sharing cap of $500 million per year for the four Gulf producing States to $650 million for the years 2020 and 2021.

Budget proposals by President Trump in 2017 and President Obama in 2016 attempted to redirect funds from GOMESA away from the Gulf States and back into more general funds. Continued advocacy from local elected officials, NGOs and businesses in the Gulf has successfully prevented such actions to date.

Eastern Gulf Moratorium
GOMESA also established the Eastern Gulf Moratorium, banning oil and gas leasing within 125 miles off the Florida coastline in the Eastern Planning Area, and a portion of the Central Planning Area, until the year 2022. GOMESA's leasing moratorium is scheduled to expire in June 2022, and BOEM has begun to plan for offshore leasing in the moratorium area after the expiration.

Access to Acreage for Leasing
With the passage of GOMESA, 8.3 million acres in the Central and Eastern Gulf of Mexico Planning areas were offered for oil and gas leasing through lease sales, which occurred in 2007, 2008, and 2009.

Egrets are just one of many birds that can be seen in Louisiana coastal habitats.

Louisiana Division of Administration: Office of Community Development

The goal of the Office of Community Development is to improve the quality of life of the residents of Louisiana by administering state and federal grants in the areas of Local Government Assistance and Disaster Recovery.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE

The Local Government Assistance Program (LGAP) and Community Water Enrichment Fund (CWEF) are funded annually through the state's capital outlay program. LGAP is designed to fill the gaps where no other state or federal funds are available to assist local governments with an identified high-priority need. Priority is given to projects that meet basic human health and safety needs, such as fire and police protection and sewer and water improvements. CWEF provides funding to aid local governments in rehabilitating, improving, and constructing projects for community water systems to provide safe, clean drinking water.

The Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) helps communities provide a suitable living environment and expand economic opportunities for their residents, particularly in low- to moderate-income areas. The block grants are awarded to the state annually by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The state's program awards and administers the funds to local government units that do not receive CDBG funds directly from HUD. The State develops funding priorities and criteria for selecting projects each year based on consultation with the local governments to identify the most essential needs of the residents.

Current Programs Include: The Sustainable Water Management Consolidation Planning Grant, Public Facilities, Louisiana Small Towns Environmental Program (LaSTEP), Demonstrated Needs, Economic Development, and a Clearance Pilot Program.

DISASTER RECOVERY UNIT

The Disaster Recovery Unit administers disaster recovery and mitigation grants allocated to Louisiana by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to help state residents recover from hurricanes such as Katrina, Rita, Gustav, Ike and Isaac and lessen the impacts of future storms. Funds are distributed through other state agencies, local governments, businesses, and nonprofit organizations to support and improve housing, infrastructure, economic development, planning and resilience. OCD-DRU manages the most extensive rebuilding effort in American history and works closely with local, state, and federal partners to ensure that Louisiana recovers safer, stronger, and smarter than before.

Citizen engagement at all levels is critical to the future of coastal Louisiana.

Louisiana Watershed Initiative

The Louisiana Watershed Initiative is a coordinated interagency effort focused on reducing flood risk and increasing resilience throughout Louisiana. Through this initiative, the state is working towards coordinating floodplain management responsibilities in Louisiana based on watershed boundaries throughout the entire state. They are also in close collaboration and partnership with local jurisdictions to achieve long-term flood risk reduction and resilience outcomes.

GEOGRAPHY

Eight watershed regions were established as part of the initiative. See the next page for a breakdown of coastal parishes by region.

STATE AGENCIES INVOLVED

Office of Community Development (main), Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, Department of Transportation and Development and Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

FUNDING

The state of Louisiana is making a massive initial investment of over $1.2 billion in the Louisiana Watershed Initiative with US HUD Community Development Block Grant–Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) dollars to fund project design and construction, regional capacity building, policy improvements, and watershed planning.

REGION 4

- DeSoto
- Sabine
- Vernon
- Rapides
- Beauregard
- Allen
- Calcasieu
- Jefferson Davis
- Cameron

REGION 5

- Rapides
- Avoyelles
- Pointe Coupee
- Allen
- Evangeline
- St. Landry
- Calcasieu
- Jefferson Davis
- Acadia
- Lafayette
- St. Martin
- Iberville
- Cameron
- Vermilion
- Iberia
- St. Mary

REGION 6

- Pointe Coupee
- West Baton Rouge
- Iberville
- Iberia
- Ascension
- Assumption
- St. James
- St. John the Baptist
- St. Martin
- St. Mary
- Terrebonne
- Lafourche
- St. Charles
- Jefferson
- Plaquemines
- Orleans

REGION 7

- West Feliciana
- East Feliciana
- St. Helena
- Tangipahoa
- Washington
- East Baton Rouge
- Livingston
- St. Tammany
- Iberville
- Ascension
- St. John the Baptist
- St. James
- St. Charles

REGION 8

- St. Charles
- Jefferson
- Orleans
- Plaquemines
- St. Bernard

Climate Initiative Task Force (CITF)

The Governor's Executive Order #8 created a Climate Initiative Task Force (**CITF**) to reduce net emissions to 0 by 2050. CITF will investigate and make recommendations for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions originating in Louisiana to achieve the stated greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals. This is necessary to improve the health and welfare of the people of Louisiana and advance Louisiana's economic and energy profile.

The GHG reduction goals are:

- By 2025, reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by 26-28% of 2005 levels;
- By 2030, reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by 40-50% of 2005 levels; and
- By 2050, reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero

Within the task force, six sector-based committees are charged with developing and evaluating emissions reduction proposals and implementation strategies to reach short, medium, and long-term emission reduction goals.

- Transportation Committee
- Agriculture, Forestry, Conservation and Waste Committee
- Land Use, Buildings, and Housing Committee
- Manufacturing and Industry Committee
- Power, Production, Distribution and Use Committee
- Mining Committee

Four advisory groups are tasked to develop fundamental objectives and a rubric for evaluating the impacts of potential solutions and provide support to Task Force and committees as needed:

- Equity Advisory Group meeting
  - Collette Pichon Battle, Gulf South Center for Law & Policy
- Finance Advisory Group
  - Brad Lambert, Louisiana Economic Development
- Science Advisory Group
  - Dr. Virginia Burkett, USGS, and Dr. Mark Zappi, University of Louisiana Lafayette
- Legal Advisory Group meeting
  - Robert Verchick, Loyola University College of Law

STATE AGENCIES INVOLVED

Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, Department of Transportation and Development, Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Department of Environmental Quality, Department of Natural Resources, Division of Administration - Facility Planning & Control, and Louisiana Economic Development

The Climate Initiative Task Force will have an important role in improving our resilience, sustaining our coast, and helping to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (**the Corps**) is a federal agency located within the Department of the Army in the Department of Defense. The Corps' mission is to "deliver vital public and military engineering services; partnering in peace and war to strengthen our Nation's security, energize the economy and reduce risks from disasters." The majority of the Corps' work in Louisiana is through their Civil Works missions, including Flood Risk Management, Navigation, Regulatory, and Environmental. The Corps is divided into regional (division) and local (district) offices. The Mississippi Valley Division (Vicksburg, MS) and the New Orleans District manage Louisiana. The Mississippi River Commission also manages some issues along the Mississippi River. It is a commission led by the Corps and some civilian, non-Corps members, which manages issues along the whole Mississippi River.

In Louisiana, some notable Corps projects include the hurricane protection system of New Orleans (the Hurricane Storm Damage Risk Reduction System), the Mississippi River levees, the Bonnet Carre and Morganza spillways, and the dredging of navigational channels (including the Mississippi River channel). The Corps also issues national permits for projects through their Regulatory department, most notably the 404 permits (allowing fill or dredged material into waters of the US) and the 408 permits (permitting the alteration of a Corps Civil Works project). They also develop Environmental Impact Statements for large non-federal projects through NEPA (notably, they will issue the final EIS for the mid-basin diversions being constructed by the State).

Funding for Corps projects is distributed through appropriations of the U.S. Congress during the regular Congressional budget process as well as disaster supplemental bills passed after major natural disasters. Disaster supplemental bills appropriate money to regions

that were recently affected by natural disasters. Recently, disaster supplementals have been passed almost every year.

Corps projects must be authorized before Congress appropriates funding. Authorizations occur through regular Water Resources Development Acts (passed about every 2 years). To create a new Corps project, they are usually first proposed by local entities or the Corps itself. The proposed project undergoes a feasibility study, and if appropriate, they can be authorized as projects after that process. Before a project is built, it usually needs a feasibility study. Feasibility studies are cost-shared by the local cost-share sponsor, which is typically the state. A feasibility study determines if a project is economically and scientifically feasible to complete. It can sometimes take decades for a project to go from concept to construction. Before CPRA existed, most coastal restoration and protection projects were conducted by the Corps. Today, the Corps is an important partner with the State to help rebuild and protect coastal Louisiana.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers plays a critical role in providing storm surge barriers like the one shown here.

Coastal Technical Assistance Center (CTAC)

The Coastal Technical Assistance Center is a joint initiative of the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) and the Louisiana Department of Economic Development (LED) located on Nicholls State University's campus in Thibodaux, LA. A similar assistance center called the Louisiana Procurement Technical Assistance Center, or PTAC and located at the University of Louisiana in Lafayette, has been established to secure federal contracts. The goal of **CTAC** is to identify and assist Louisiana-based small businesses in obtaining government contracts for coastal restoration and protection projects at the local, state, and federal levels. CTAC will help companies acquire training, licensing and other qualifications to participate in the public bidding process for coastal recovery projects.

STATE AGENCIES INVOLVED

Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) and the Louisiana Department of Economic Development (LED)

FUNDING

LED and CPRA will provide a combined $750,000 in seed funding to establish the center. Each agency will contribute $125,000 annually for three years, beginning with the current 2020 fiscal year.

*Visit us at **MississippiRiverDelta.org/handbook** for additional details along with up-to-date contact information.*

RESTORE THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER DELTA

We are a coalition made up of the National Audubon Society, Environmental Defense Fund, the National Wildlife Federation, Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana and Pontchartrain Conservancy. Our organization includes conservation, policy, science and outreach experts working to rebuild Louisiana's coast by reconnecting the river to its wetlands.

LEARN MORE AT
MISSISSIPPIRIVERDELTA.ORG

RESTORE
THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER DELTA