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April 11, 2019

CWPPRA Tech Committee Meeting
LA Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (Louisiana Room)
2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA

RE: Letter of Support for Northeast Turtle Bay Extension Marsh Creation for the CWPPRA Priority Project List 29

Dear Mr. Inman and CWPPRA Task Force Members:

As organizations with long-standing interest in the Louisiana CWPPRA coastal projects and funding designations, we are writing to express our support for the Northeast Turtle Bay Marsh Creation project (BA-04) that is currently being proposed for Priority Project List 29 (PPL 29). We believe that this project has the potential to work in concert with other nearby restoration projects to provide multiple benefits to Louisiana and the Mississippi River Delta ecosystem as a whole. We hope that you take this project into consideration for further evaluation as the CWPPRA process advances throughout the year.

The 2017 Coastal Master Plan selected two projects needed to maintain the Barataria Landbridge, Large-Scale Barataria Marsh Creation Components A and E (002.MC.04a and 002.MC.05e). The Barataria Landbridge is a vital landscape feature in the Barataria Basin, separating the freshwater wetlands in the upper part of the basin from the brackish and saltwater wetlands in the lower part of the basin. The long-term health and resiliency of the freshwater wetlands and the communities in the upper Barataria Basin rely heavily on the continued existence of this landbridge. These wetlands not only provide important habitat for the fish and wildlife of the Barataria Basin, but these wetlands also provide protection against storm surge and tidal flooding for the nearby community of Lafitte. The Northeast Turtle Bay Extension Marsh Creation project proposed for CWPPRA PPL 29 is within 2017 Coastal master Plan's Large-Scale Barataria Marsh Creation –Component A.

The proposed Northeast Turtle Bay Extension Marsh Creation project would benefit 610 acres and would work in concert with nearby CWPPRA projects that have been constructed (BA-27, BA-36, BA-48, BA-43, BA-39, BA-164), are in construction (BA-125) and are in engineering and design (BA-206). In addition, this proposed project is also near two projects that are currently in engineering and design and are being considered for funding via the Deepwater Horizon Natural Resource Damage Program, the Large-Scale Barataria Marsh Creation (BA-207) and the Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion (BA-0153). The benefits of the Northeast Turtle Bay Extension Marsh Creation project, combined with these other restoration projects would go a long way to restoring and maintaining the Barataria Landbridge into the future.

We think that this project should be advanced by the CWPPRA program and Technical Committee to the next phase for PPL 29. This project will work synergistically with already established projects and future projects to provide immense benefits to the coastal environment. Projects must work with one another to effectively restore the coast and reduce future impacts predicted to occur, such as sea level rise and increased storm



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intensity. It is important that we, along with the government and concerned stakeholders, do everything we can to implement projects that will protect the habitat, wildlife, and people that call this region home.

We are pleased to see CWPPRA continuing their efforts to provide funding for much needed projects. This process has already provided immense support for coastal restoration and continues to push forward projects consistent with the Coastal Master Plan. We hope these comments underscore both the importance of the proposed project, the urgency of project implementation and continuing fiscal responsibility as we work together toward a sustainable coast.

Sincerely,

Natalie Peyronnin,
Science Policy Director
Environmental Defense Fund

John Lopez, Ph.D.,
Director, Coastal Sustainability Program
Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation

Kim Reyher,
Executive Director,
Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana

Cynthia Duet
Deputy Director,
Audubon Louisiana

David Muth
Director, Mississippi River Delta Restoration Program
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