



November 19, 2019

Louisiana Coastal Wetlands Planning Protection and Restoration Act Program

Brad Inman  
Department of the Army  
New Orleans District, Corps of Engineers  
Email: Brad.L.Inman@usace.army.mil

*RE: Letter of Support for St. Catherine's Pass Marsh Creation and Shoreline Protection - CWPPRA Priority Project List 29*

Dear Mr. Inman and CWPPRA Task Force Members:

Since Hurricane Katrina, the MRGO Must Go Coalition (Coalition) has advocated for restoration of the ecosystem impacted by the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet. Today, we are writing to express our support for the St. Catherine's Pass Marsh Creation and Shoreline Protection project proposed for PPL 29 Phase I funding. The St. Catherine's Pass project will restore 283 acres of marsh on the imperiled New Orleans East Landbridge, consistent with the 2017 Coastal Master Plan and the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation's Comprehensive Habitat Management Plan, which were approved by the Louisiana Legislature and EPA, respectively.

The New Orleans East Landbridge is a priority restoration area for the Coalition because it serves as a critical buffer between Lake Pontchartrain and the Gulf of Mexico. Without action, this buffer will essentially disappear in the next 50 years, leaving the City of New Orleans and many other communities at severe risk for storm surge flooding. The landbridge is also important habitat for fish and wildlife, including sturgeon and migratory birds. Our Coalition's restoration goals on the landbridge are exemplified in the St. Catherine's Pass project, which aims to restore eroding and degraded marsh on the landbridge, improving wildlife habitat and increasing protection from flooding.

In addition, this project will repair a portion of the damage caused by the MRGO, which is a high priority for the State of Louisiana, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the communities and conservation organizations that have advocated for restoration in this area. As part of the MRGO Ecosystem Area, this project area has enjoyed strong public support over the last several years and continues to be a prominent area visited on boat tours and flyover along the coast. Tens of thousands of people have commented in support of a suite of restoration projects along the MRGO, which include restoration of the New Orleans East Landbridge.

Thank you for your consideration. We support this project to receive Phase I funding for Engineering and Design.

Sincerely,

## MRGO Must Go Coalition

*American Rivers*

*Citizens Against Widening the Industrial Canal*

*Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana*

*Environmental Defense Fund*

*Global Green*

*Gulf Restoration Network*

*Holy Cross Neighborhood Association*

*Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation*

*Levees.org*

*Louisiana Environmental Action Network*

*Louisiana Wildlife Federation*

*Lower Mississippi Riverkeeper*

*Lower Ninth Ward Center for Sustainable Engagement and Development*

*Mary Queen of Vietnam Community Development Corporation*

*National Audubon Society*

*National Wildlife Federation*

*Sierra Club – Delta Chapter*

*Additional signers:*

*A Community Voice*

*lowernine.org*