

April 18, 2022

To: Louisiana Trustee Implementation Group

Re: Draft Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment #8: Wetlands, Coastal, and Nearshore Habitats

Dear Trustees-

We, the 161 signers representing business and community leaders, elected officials, sportsmen, scientists, landowners, and nonprofits, write to express enthusiastic support for Draft Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment #8. We are particularly pleased to see the East Orleans Landbridge recommended for Engineering and Design funding, given the ecological importance of the project and the broad public support demonstrated for the project during your drafting process. We are also pleased to see Bayou la Loutre Ridge Restoration and Marsh Creation recommended for construction, which complements the East Orleans Landbridge in that it is also part of the Multiple Lines of Defense strategy for storm surge protection in the Pontchartrain Basin. We also support Bayou la Loutre Ridge project coordination with Lake Borgne Marsh Creation to save on time and cost for the adjacent projects. **This draft plan represents a major step forward in habitat restoration and coastal protection for communities from St. Bernard to New Orleans, to the Northshore, to the River Parishes.**

The Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill impacted nearshore coastal marsh habitat throughout Louisiana, including the East Orleans Landbridge and the Biloxi Marsh, in which Bayou la Loutre flows. These are critically important areas for both ecosystem health and community protection. **Large-scale restoration is urgently needed to stabilize these areas and restore eroding and degraded marsh, thereby improving habitat and increasing protection from storm-induced flooding.**

The East Orleans Landbridge serves several important functions:

- Reduces storm surge in Lake Pontchartrain enhancing storm protection for over 1.5 million people who live around Lake Pontchartrain and Lake Maurepas, including the cities of New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Metairie, LaPlace, Mandeville and Slidell;
- Provides vital wetland and estuarine functions, including control of tidal flow between the Gulf of Mexico and Lake Pontchartrain, benefitting the ecosystem and the people who rely on a healthy estuary for their livelihoods;
- Serves as important habitat for hundreds of species of fish and wildlife, including sturgeon and migratory birds;
- Aids the effectiveness of the Hurricane & Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (HSDRRS) surrounding the Greater New Orleans and hosts the Highway 90 hurricane evacuation route.
- Helps maintain or enhance important commercial fisheries, such as shrimp and blue crab.
- Helps maintain or enhance recreational fishery, such as speckled trout and redbfish.

The Bayou la Loutre Ridge also serves critical ecosystem functions:

- Provides a component of storm protection for the immediate surrounding communities in St. Bernard and for nearby levees that make up the HSDRRS system;
- Maintains integrity of portions of Biloxi Marsh;

- Creates important diversity in plants and wildlife, supporting a Live Oak-Hackberry maritime forest habitat that is critical for a variety of wildlife, including hundreds of thousands of migratory birds crossing the Gulf of Mexico.

Restoration of the East Orleans Landbridge and Bayou la Loutre Ridge have garnered support from tens of thousands of people since Hurricane Katrina. Restoration of the East Orleans Landbridge and Bayou la Loutre Ridge are recommended by the 2012 Army Corps MRGO Ecosystem Feasibility Report and the 2017 Louisiana Coastal Master Plan. The East Orleans Landbridge is also a priority area identified in the City of New Orleans Resilience Strategy and the Orleans Parish Hazard Mitigation Plan. Restoration of Bayou la Loutre Ridge is a Tier 1 priority in the St. Bernard Parish Coastal Strategy Document.

As concerned stakeholders, we strongly support this Draft Restoration Plan #8 and would like to see the work move forward with urgency. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Chris Dier
2020 Louisiana Teacher of the Year and
National Teacher of the Year Finalist

Fred Zink
Avian-X Decoys

Andy Kowalczyk
350 New Orleans

T. Bradley Keith
Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program

Rev. Bell Butler
A Community Voice

Adam Knapp
Baton Rouge Area Chamber

Dave Dixon
Adventure Design, LLC

James Peter Kelly
Baton Rouge Resident

Tommy Akin
Akin Promotions

Dave Demarest and Fiona Delargy
Bayou Beer Garden, Bayou Wine Garden, Holy
Ground Irish Pub

Rev. Jay Angerer
All Saints Episcopal Church

Mike Boyd
Beaver Dam Hunting Services

Charmaine Kathman
All Saints River Ridge

Rev. Dr. Cory Sparks
Bethany United Methodist Church

Logan Burke
Alliance for Affordable Energy

Bill Buckley
Bill Buckley Outdoor Photography

Russ Allison
Allison Contracting

Wes Higgins
Bill Lewis Fishing (Rat-L-Trap)

Polly Glover
Ascension Parish Resident

Jackie VanCleave
Blackley VanCleave Fishing

Allen Hughes
Avery Outdoors

Buck Gardner
Buck Gardner Calls

Dana Honn
Café Carmo

Brendan Hughes
Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana Board of Directors

Ryan Lambert
Cajun Fishing Adventures

Robert Gardiner
Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana Board of Directors

Barnie Calef
Calef Calls Inc.

James Tripp
Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana Coastal Advisory Council

Byron Almquist
Canoe and Trail

Robert D. Gorman
Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana Coastal Advisory Council

Rick Allison
Capital Heavy Equipment

Tina Freeman
Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana Coastal Advisory Council

Travis Thompson
Cast & Blast Florida

Monique Harden
Deep South Center for Environmental Justice

Nathan Richard
New Orleans Resident

Mike Bengé
Delacroix Corporation

Dickie Brennan
Chef and Restaurateur

Richie Blink
Delta Discovery

Fernell Cryar
Christ Church Covington

John Lopez, PhD
Delta Science, LLC

Richard Cryar
Christ Church Covington

Erik Guggenheim
Delta Structural Technology

Zach Monroe
City of New Orleans

Brock Piglia
DonahueFavret Contractors

Pete Digre
Climate Reality NOLA

Rockey LeFlore
Ducksouth

Kimberly Davis Reyher
Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana

Charlotte Clarke
Common Ground Relief Wetlands, LLC

Nina Compton
Compère Lapin, Bywater American Bistro

Sarah Giles
Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana Board of
Directors

Cathleen Berthelot
Environmental Defense Fund

Deacon Joey Clavijo
Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana

Rev. Frederick Devall
Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana

Randy Fertel
Fertel Foundation

Shawn Moses Anglim
First Grace United Methodist Church

Jacqueline Richard
Fletcher Technical Community College

Denise Byrne
Friends of New Orleans, Founding Board Member

Matt Sweeney
Full Throttle Hog Dogs

Ramsey Russell
Get Ducks

Bill Bridge
Global Green USA

Warren Coco
Go-Devil Manufacturers

Butch Davis
Godfather Manufacturing

Barney Callahan
East Ascension Sportsman's League

Jennifer Sherrod-Blackwell
Elysian Seafood & Elysian Events Catering

Ernesto Maldonado
EM Improvements

Harry Shearer
Entertainer

Jefferson Parish Government

Parker Kilgore
Jones Walker LLP

Brian Chandler
Key Corner Sportsman's Club

Lauren Hall
LAH Designs

Canaan Heard
Lake Charles Resident

Louis Capo
Lakefront Management Authority

Cindy Brown
Land Trust for Louisiana

Jake Latendresse
Latendresse Media

Garry Mason
Legends of the Outdoors Hall of Fame

Sandy Rosenthal
Levees.org

Liz Shephard
LifeCity

Patrick A. Barnes, P.G.
Limitless Vistas, Inc.

Brent McCrossen
GRIPNR, Revelry StartUp Studio

Cynthia Sarthou
Healthy Gulf

Mayra Pineda
Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of LA

Laura Paul
Holy Cross Neighborhood Association

Steve MaCadams
Hunting & Fishing with Steve McCadams

Marie Gould
Louisiana Lost Lands Environmental Tours

Mike Smith
Louisiana Marsh Guide Service

Sen. Karen Carter Peterson
Louisiana State Senate

Sen. Joseph Bouie
Louisiana State Senate

Rebecca Triche
Louisiana Wildlife Federation

Arthur Johnson
Lower 9th Ward Center for Sustainable
Engagement and Development

Shirley Laska
Lowlander Center, Co-founder & Senior Staff

Marcus Jacobs
Marjie's Grill, Seafood Sally's

Mickey Graham
MG Structures

Topher Rieth
Mid City Construction

Louis Michot
Lost Bayou Ramblers

Rep. Amy Freeman
Louisiana House of Representatives

Rep. Royce Duplessis
Louisiana House of Representatives

Rep. Matthew Willard
Louisiana House of Representatives

Rep. Mandie Landry
Louisiana House of Representatives

Megan Thorne Sfamurri
New Orleans Resident

Kristian Sonnier
New Orleans Resident

Cynthia Guillment
New Orleans Resident

Jon Dijkhuizen
NOLA Woodworks

Jennifer Coulson
Orleans Audubon Society

Greg Gasperecz
Orleans Parish Resident

Stephen Chustz
Outcome Based Solutions

Larry Rea
Outdoors with Larry Rea

Susan Spicer
Rosedale Restaurant

James Collier
Paprika Studios, The Boil Advisory

Carlton Viers
Mid-South Hunting & Fishing News

Melissa Martin
Mosquito Supper Club

Brian Moore
National Audubon Society

Amanda Moore
National Wildlife Federation

Sandra Lindquist
New Orleans Chamber of Commerce

Jim Hyatt
New Orleans Fly Fishers

Ellen Blue
New Orleans Resident

Leighann Smith
Piece of Meat Butcher

Monica Gorman
Pontchartrain Basin Board Member – CPRA

Kristi Trail, PE
Pontchartrain Conservancy

John D. Ross Jr.
PosiGen

James Wiltenmuth
Postlethwaite & Netterville

Chris Hill
Premier Custom Calls

Karl Rabago
Rábago Energy LLC

Stuart Swanson
Red River Cold Storage

Doug Karpicke
Riverview Appraisal

John Kinabrew
Pontchartrain Conservancy Advocacy Committee

Andrew Brien
Pontchartrain Conservancy Advocacy Committee

Philip Clinton
Pontchartrain Conservancy Advocacy Committee

Patricia Meadowcroft
Pontchartrain Conservancy Board Chair

Martin Landrieu
Pontchartrain Conservancy Board of Directors

Ryan Prewitt
Pêche Seafood Grill

Virginia Hanusik
Photographer

George Bond
St. George's Episcopal

President Jaclyn Hotard
St. John the Baptist Parish

Ashley Liuzza
Stag Liuzza LLC

Mark Copley
Strike King Lure Company

Scott Gordon
Take 'Em Magazine

Chris Macaluso
Teddy Roosevelt Conservation Partnership

Blaise Pezold
The Arlene and Joseph Meraux Charitable
Foundation

Barbara Johnson
The Great Delta Tours

Jason Goodenough
The New Culinarian

Jim Ronquest
RNT Calls

Mike Stewart
The Stewart Agency

Kirk Rhinehart
Royal Engineering & Consultants, LLC

Jessica Dandridge
The Water Collaborative

Ashwin Vilku
Saffron NOLA

Pat Pitt
The Waterfowler Taxidermy

Leo Laventhal
Sierra Club - New Orleans

Sarah Mack, PhD.
Tierra Resources, LLC

Kelli Chandler
South Louisiana Flood Protection Authority – East

Eric Cosby
Top Brass Tackle

Mindy Nunez Airhart
Southern Services & Equipment, Inc.

Chef Isaac Toups
Toups' Meastery

Meredith Dowling
SouthWings, LLC

Adam Adkisson
Triton Boats

President Matthew Jewell
St. Charles Parish

Rep. Troy Carter
United States Congress

Mike McNett
USA Ice Team

Khai Nguyen
Village De L'Est Community

Albertine Kimble
VP Sporting Council, Plaquemines Parish
Landowner

Randy Smith
Wingate Engineers

Clay Conner
Xpress Boats