

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 redfish.

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

Allen Hughes  
Avery Outdoors

Dana Honn  
Café Carmo

Ryan Lambert  
Cajun Fishing Adventures

Barnie Calef  
Calef Calls Inc.

Byron Almquist  
Canoe and Trail

Rick Allison  
Capital Heavy Equipment

Travis Thompson  
Cast & Blast Florida

Nathan Richard  
New Orleans Resident

Dickie Brennan  
Chef and Restaurateur

Fernell Cryar  
Christ Church Covington

Richard Cryar  
Christ Church Covington

Zach Monroe  
City of New Orleans

Pete Digre  
Climate Reality NOLA

Jackie VanCleave  
Blackley VanCleave Fishing

Buck Gardner  
Buck Gardner Calls

Brendan Hughes  
Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana Board of  
Directors

Robert Gardiner  
Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana Board of  
Directors

James Tripp  
Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana Coastal  
Advisory Council

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

Tina Freeman  
Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana Coastal  
Advisory Council

Monique Harden  
Deep South Center for Environmental Justice

Mike Bengé  
Delacroix Corporation

Richie Blink  
Delta Discovery

John Lopez, PhD  
Delta Science, LLC

Erik Guggenheim  
Delta Structural Technology

Brock Piglia  
DonahueFavret Contractors

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  
Rabago 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