Presentation Notes

Louisiana Trustee Implementation Group
2020 Annual Public Meeting

September 9, 2020

This document is intended to accompany the Louisiana Trustee Implementation Group's presentation slides from their September 9, 2020 Public Meeting webinar.

Slide 1:

Hello. I'd like to welcome you to the Deepwater Horizon Natural Resource Damage Assessment Louisiana Trustee Implementation Group annual public meeting. Thank you for your interest and attendance. My name is Gabriella, I'm a contractor supporting the Louisiana TIG and I'll be going over the agenda and some preliminary information.

Slide 2:

First, we will go over some webinar logistics. Next, Mel Landry with the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration will briefly talk to you about three DWH funding sources and explain our focus on the Natural Resource Damage Assessment Process. Then, Mel will provide an overview of the DWH NRDA settlement dollars and the allocation of those dollars. After that, Maury Chantellier with the Louisiana Coastal Protection & Restoration Authority will provide an overview of restoration implementation. After the presentation you will be able to provide input to the LA TIG via the process I'll now outline.

Slide 3:

Hopefully everyone's logged in to the webinar by now. You should be able to see the control panel on the right-hand side of your screen. If you're using a phone for audio, you should all be dialing in using the phone number provided by GoToWebinar—that's the number and access code listed under "Audio" in the control panel. Please note that only presenters will be heard over the phone during the webinar; attendees will be muted. Take a look at the "Questions" box at the bottom of the control panel (shown on this slide). If you have a comment you would like to share with the Trustees please type it into this box and we will read as many comments as we can in the time allotted. The trustees will not respond to comments during this webinar, but your input will be considered as the trustees continue planning and implementation efforts.

Slide 4:

All the meeting materials will be available at la-dwh.com as well as the Trustee website Gulf Spill Restoration dot NOAA dot gov. And now I'll turn it over to Mel Landy from NOAA to continue the presentation.

Slide 5:

Thank you, Gabriella. I'm Mel Landry and I'm the trustee representative for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. I'll walk you through the Deepwater Horizon Natural Resource Damage Assessment Planning Process and then hand the presentation over to Maury Chatellier with CPRA to provide an implementation update.

Slide 6:

There are 3 different sources of Deepwater Horizon Settment funding that we work with in Louisiana. Tonight, we'll focus on the portion that is the Natural Resource Damage Assessment funding. In addition to Natural Resource Damage Assessment portion the Deepwater Horizon settlement also awarded funds through the Clean Water Act Civil and Criminal penalties.

NRDA – Oil Pollution Act (for damage oil caused to the environment):

- The Natural Resource Damage Assessment is focused on restoring damage to the environment caused by the oil. It is a legal process under the Oil Pollution Act whereby state and federal trustees represent the public interest to ensure that natural resources injured in an oil spill are restored.
- This process includes
    - The assessment of oil spill impacts on natural resources which began immediately after the spill and continued until settlement in 2015 and
    - It also includes the restoration needed to compensate the public for the impacts to these natural resources which began during early restoration in 2012 and continues today.

RESTORE Act – Clean Water Act Civil Penalties (penalty for spilling oil)

- The RESTORE Act if funded by Clean Water Act penalties for spilling of the oil. The Act created the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund (RTF),
- The fund will receive 80% of any Clean Water Act (CWA) civil and administrative penalties paid by BP and other companies responsible for the Deepwater Horizon Spill
- Funds from Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund are divided amount five different "pots or buckets" of money that are distributed and managed differently.
    - To learn more about the pots, you can visit the Restore Act website at www.RestoreTheGulf.gov

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) - Criminal Plea Agreements:

- The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) manages the money from the Criminal Plea Agreements through the Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund
- NFWF will administer and monitor $2.544 billion in payments received over a five-year period as required under the plea agreements

Again, our focus tonight is on the Natural Resource Damage Assessment funding.

Slide 7:

The LA TIG will receive $5 billion for the Deepwater Horizon (DWH) oil spill Natural Resource Damages (NRD). Settlement funds to be paid by BP on or before April 4 of each year, beginning in 2017 through 2031 (with the annual payment in most years being 319,211,220). Pursuant to the Oil Pollution Act (OPA), the natural resource trustees must use these funds to restore environmental damages caused by the DWH oil spill.

Slide 8:

Here is the breakdown of the funding dollars by restoration area, and by categories. The settlement determines how funds will be spent. The funds are broken out first geographically in the columns —into restoration areas defined by geography, as well as funds for the region-wide and open ocean restoration areas. Then by each restoration type in those areas as depicted in the rows. Across the bottom are the totals for each restoration area. Louisiana is getting the most, in fact more than half: $5 Billion. I know this slide is difficult to read so we have the information for the Louisiana Restoration Area broken down in the following slides. You can also find a copy of this table on the trustee website.

Slide 9:

This pie chart shows the allocation of funds between restoration areas. You can see that the Louisiana restoration area gets the largest allocation of 5 billion dollars. These are the columns and the totals at the bottom of each column.

Slide 10:

With the Louisiana restoration area, the $5 billion dollars is distributed between restoration categories. This chart breaks down the allocation between restoration categories within the Louisiana Restoration Area. These are the rows within the Louisiana Restoration Area. Within these categories, the funds are further broken down into restoration types. For example within Living Coastal Marine Resources you'll find sea turtles, marine mammals, birds, and oysters.

Slide 11:

The Louisiana Trustee Implementation Group plans for the expenditure of funds and implements projects using the funds. It includes representation from 5 State and 4 Federal Trustees.

- The State Trustees are the Coastal Protection Restoration Authority, the Department of Wildlife & Fisheries, the Department of Environmental Quality, the Department of Natural Resources, and the Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinator's Office, all represented by Bren Haase
- The Federal Trustees are The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration represented to by myself, Mel Landry; the Department of Interior represented by Erin Chandler, the Environmental Protection Agency represented today by Doug Jacobson, and the Department of Agriculture, represented today by Ron Howard.

Slide 12:

Typical Natural Resource Damage Assessment process integrates the Natural Resource Damage Assessment evaluation with the National Environmental Policy Act evaluation (you may have heard of an Environmental Assessment or an Environmental Impact Statement) into a single restoration plan. Due to the size and complexity of some projects, we have decided to phase restoration planning under certain circumstances. One example was the 1st LA TIG restoration plan, which included selection of 6 projects for engineering and design, three of which will have construction costs of over $100M each. The Strategic restoration plan for the Barataria Basin was also a Phase I plan. Much of our upcoming planning efforts will be the Phase II Plans that evaluate construction alternatives previously approved for design in Phase I Plans. I'll walk through the phased approach here.

Slide 13:

For Phased Restoration, in the first phase an Oil Pollution Act evaluation is conducted to selected projects to further develop, typically this means Engineering & Design. In most cases, E&D impacts are fully evaluated in the PDARP and incorporated in the Phase 1 plan, so no additional NEPA evaluation is required in the first phase. After E&D has progressed sufficiently, a Phase 2 plan (or plans) evaluates design alternatives under NEPA and OPA and selects a preferred design alt for construction funding. The Phase 1 Plan is not an exhaustive evaluation of impacts. The Phase 1 Plan sets up a more robust analysis in the phase 2 plan.

Slide 14:

Trustees are responsible for restoring the environment and compensating the public for natural resource injuries resulting from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. We used a natural resource damage assessment to determine the extent of injuries to natural resources and to seek restoration or compensation from the parties responsible for those injuries. In the case of the Deepwater Horizon Spill, the compensation is the settlement agreed to in 2015. The Trustees now use that settlement to guide decisions on how to use funds in restoring the natural resources damaged by the spill. The goal is to restore injured natural resources—such as wetlands, fish, and birds—to the condition they would have been in had the spill not occurred. We are also responsible for addressing recreational uses—like boating and swimming—that were affected by the spill. I will now turn the presentation over to Maury Chatellier with the Louisiana Coastal Protection & Restoration Authority for details on the Trustee Implementation Group's accomplishments since the settlement and specifically since we last met a year ago.

Slide 15:

Thank you, Mel, and good evening everyone. My name is Maury Chatellier, the DWH Program Administrator for the State of Louisiana. For the Louisiana update, we'll start with the overall funding overview. To date, we've committed over $744M for projects and planning activities, which is about 15% of Louisiana's total $5B allocation, but it's just over 40% of the $1.8B payments the TIG has received to date. The state will receive the remainder of its allocation through annual payments of about $319M each year through 2031.

Slide 16:

We'll start with the TIG's pre-settlement activities:

On the 1st Anniversary of the oil spill in April 2011, BP committed up to $1 Billion down payment on its future Natural Resource Damage (NRD) liability. This billion-dollar commitment was gulf wide and used to fund various projects to jump start restoration of injured natural resources. From 2011-2016, the trustees approved 65 projects across the gulf coast with Louisiana receiving app. $346M for numerous projects. On this slide we have an overview of the Early Restoration (ER) projects, the restoration funds allocated to Louisiana for each project, and the status of each of these projects. As you can see all of these have been constructed with the exception of the Breton Island project, which is currently under construction.

Phase I of ER approved 2 LA projects:

1. Lake Hermitage Marsh Creation project
2. LA Oyster Cultch & Hatchery project

Phase III of ER approved one LA project with four components:

1. LA Outer Coast Restoration:

- Calliou Lake headland (Whiskey) and Shell West were projects from the LCA program that were pivoted to construction with early ER funds.
- Cheniere Ronquille, also a CWPPRA project, was brought to construction by our good friends at NOAA.
- Breton Island is being implemented by DOI through the USFWS with a construction award coming just a couple of weeks ago.

The ER total allocation of restoration funds was $346 million dollars. LA was also allocated an additional $22 million for recreational use during Phase III of ER which has since been reallocated over 4 Rec Use projects in Louisiana which will be discussed in a few minutes.

Slide 17:

This photo shows the completed Caillou Headland Lake project in Terrebonne Parish that used up $118M in early restoration funds. 9.4 million cubic yards were dredged to create about 750 acres of beach and dune habitat, and 1 million cubic yards were dredged for about 178 acres of marsh.

Slide 18:

And this is Chenier Ronquille pre-construction, looking eastward in lower Plaquemines Parish. This was a CWPPRA design project that was pivoted to construction with NRDA early restoration dollars and implemented by NOAA.

Slide 19:

And then the post construction of the island looking west back toward the Grand Terre islands and Grand Isle. This area includes 275 acres beach, dune and marsh habitat and is a total of 2.7M cubic yards.

Slide 20:

The LA TIG has been very busy since the landmark settlement in 2016. We have finalized a total of 11 Restoration Plans and a number of Supplemental Environmental Assessments in the last 4.5 years. We'll now walk through those plans in more detail.

Slide 21:

We released our first restoration plan, "*Restoration of Wetlands, Coastal, and Nearshore Habitats; Habitat Projects on Federally Managed Lands; and Birds*" in January, 2017. That plan funded engineering and design activities for 6 restoration projects and highlighted some of the overarching goals and objectives of the LA TIG as restoration planning moves forward.

Slide 22:

In this restoration plan, the Trustees selected 6 projects to move forward with E&D under three restoration types:

Under the wetlands, coastal and nearshore habitats type we initiated three projects:

- Terrebonne Basin Ridge and Marsh Creation: Bayou Terrebonne Increment
- Barataria Basin Ridge and Marsh Creation: Spanish Pass Increment
- Lake Borgne Marsh Creation: Increment One

RP #1 included a project under the habitat projects on federally managed lands.

- Shoreline Protection at Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

And, finally, two projects to restore for birds:

- Queen Bess Island Restoration
- Rabbit Island Restoration

Slide 23:

This slide shows the regional disbursement of the six RP#1 projects. When completed these projects 1 will create several hundred acres of ridge and over 5,500 acres of marsh, restore critical bird habitats and pelican rookeries, and provide shoreline protection improvements. These projects are estimated to total more than $400,000,000. We will touch on each of these projects individually and in more detail as we move through today's presentation.

Slide 24:

As we just discussed, the Queen Bess Island Restoration Project was selected for E&D in RP 1 and, upon the engineering and design process reaching a stage for a meaningful analysis, construction of the project was evaluated in RP/EA 1.1. This Phase 2 construction plan was completed in March 2019 and approved the fully funded cost of $18,710,000.

Slide 25:

Queen Bess Island is located in Barataria Basin, just north east of Grand Isle. Queen Bess is one of the largest colonial waterbird rookeries in the state and one of the only brown pelican colonies in the

Barataria Basin. This project is important because approx. 30% of the country's brown pelicans nest in Louisiana and its estimated that we've lost about 50% of our state colonies over the last decade. The top image shows the completed construction project. Open water areas on the island have been filled and the nesting habitat restored. The on-island work finished in February and Brown Pelicans began returning *en masse* in early March with the first BR Pelican egg documented on March 11. The year one estimates are impressive: At the peak it was estimated about 8000 nests on the 36 acre island. We are very excited to see these results and are confident that this will be one of the many success stories funded through NRD dollars.

Slide 26:

The second phase 2 RP is RP 1.2. We anticipate that this Draft plan will be completed this year. This Plan has previously gone through public review and comment and the Trustees are in the process of finalizing this Plan (by the end of the month). RP 1.2 proposes two preferred projects for construction:

1. Spanish Pass project – This proposed project is designed to create approximately 137 acres of ridge and 1,550 acres of marsh with a fully funded cost of $110.5 Million. The ridge and marsh creation project would use an estimated 11.28 million cubic yards (MCY) of fill from Mississippi River borrow areas.

2. Lake Borgne – Increment One – The Proposed project is designed to create approximately 2,800 acres of marsh habitat with a fully funded cost of $113.7 Million. This project would utilize an estimated 13.2 million cubic yards (MCY) of fill from the Lake Borgne borrow area.

Again, when finalized, this Phase 2 RP will authorize construction activities for these projects.

Slide 27:

This is one of those projects - the Spanish Pass Ridge and Marsh Creation project. The marsh and ridge areas shown in purple to the west of Venice Louisiana with the designated Mississippi River borrow areas in yellow. Again, this project will create over 1500 acres in lower Plaquemines.

Slide 28:

Moving forward with RP 1.3 which was completed in February 2020 and approved $37,000,000 in funding for 2 projects – Rabbit Island Restoration Project and the Shoreline Protection at Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve Project.

Slide 29:

This image shows Rabbit Island in its current state. The project is located in Cameron Parish just off the Calcasieu Ship Channel. This project will result in raising the elevation of the island to increase the abundance and quality of critical nesting habitat for a number of colonial nesting waterbirds including brown pelicans, wading birds, and terns. The project will utilize dredged material from the Calcasieu Ship Channel – which you can see in the background. RP 1.3 approved the fully funded cost of $16,440,000 (includes E&D approved in RP 1) for Rabbit Island. Construction activities recently began in August.

Slide 30:

The Shoreline Protection at Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve Project was also funded in RP 1.3. The goal of this project is to Restore 50 acres of (sub aquatic vegetation) SAV and provide structural shoreline protection. The fully funded cost of this project is $20,448,556. This project was solicited for Construction in June of this year with an anticipated Contract award this month. (September 2020)

Slide 31:

As discussed earlier, during Phase III of early restoration, the state was allocated $22M for recreational use opportunities. In July 2018, RP/EA #2 which re-allocated those dollars in Early Restoration funds toward 4 rec use projects.

Slide 32:

This restoration plan addressed lost recreational use opportunities in Louisiana from the oil spill. As stated, the RP reallocated $22 million towards 4 projects:

- Elmer's Island Recreational Access Enhancement project – approved $6,000,000 for project features intended to increase access to and use of the natural and recreational resources on Elmer's Island in lower Jefferson Parish. This project is in final E&D and construction activities are anticipated this year.
- Statewide Artificial Reef Enhancement project – approved $6,000,000 to improve 10 artificial reefs in coastal Louisiana. Eight of these reefs have been constructed and the remaining two will be completed in the near future.
- Lake Charles Science Center and Educational Complex project – total project allocation is $7,000,000 which will be used for the design, implementation, and operations of the Lake Charles Science Center component collocated in the Port Wonder Facility on the Lake Charles Lake Front along with the Lake Charles Children's Museum. Total Project budget is anticipated to be in the $20 M range. Engineering and Design of the building and exhibits are ongoing.
- Island Road Fishing Piers project on the Pointe-aux-Chenes Wildlife Management Area. The Island Road Fishing Piers used $3 Million to create a series of safe road-side pullover and parking areas with adjoining recreational fishing access points on Island Road in the Pointe-aux-Chenes Wildlife Management Area (PACWMA). This project was completed in August 2020

Slide 33:

So we move on to RP#3, which is a Strategic RP/EA to guide future restoration of habitats in Barataria Basin. This plan was finalized in March of 2018.

Slide 34:

The trustees prepared a Strategic Restoration Plan for Barataria Basin because the wetlands in Barataria Basin experienced some of the heaviest and most persistent oiling from the DWH oil spill, which significantly accelerated the already high rate of erosion in the Basin. This Strategic Restoration Plan identified and adopted a restoration strategy that will help prioritize future restoration decisions in the

Basin and will allow for the most efficient use of Louisiana's restoration funds. The SRP evaluated Coastal Master Plan habitat restoration projects, as well as project submittals from the public. The purpose of this SRP is to help restore for ecosystem-level injuries in the Barataria Basin and the Gulf of Mexico through restoration of critical wetlands, coastal, and nearshore habitat resources.

Slide 35:

Rather than selecting specific projects for construction, the Trustees evaluated a suite of restoration techniques/approaches, for example large-scale diversions or marsh creation, to determine how to best support restoring ecosystem-level injuries in the GOM through restoration in Barataria Basin. Two decisions were made in this Strategic Restoration Plan:

1. The Trustees determined that a suite of restoration approaches/techniques in BB, including large-scale sediment diversions to restore deltaic processes, marsh creation, and ridge restoration, would best restore for the ecosystem-level injuries in the Basin. This strategy recognizes that a large-scale sediment diversion in BB likely would provide benefits to the ecosystem that cannot be realized by any other technique or suite of techniques – for example, one that relies on large-scale marsh creation without a diversion.
2. Trustees selected and advanced several projects forward for further evaluation and planning:

    - MBSD

    - Large Scale Marsh Creation – Component E from the state's master plan in northern Barataria Basin

The Trustees also confirmed their decision to move the Barataria Basin Ridge and Marsh Creation – Spanish Pass Increment project forward for further evaluation and planning.

Slide 36:

Restoration Plan #3.3 was completed in July of 2020. This phase 2 plan provided construction dollars for the Large scale marsh creation project – Upper Barataria component.

Slide 37:

This approximately 1,200 acre marsh creation project will be implemented by NOAA, in partnership with other federal and state trustees on the Louisiana TIG. The project includes filling areas to create an intertidal marsh platform that will support marsh plants and support healthy wetland habitat, which can lessen the impact of future storms by dissipating wave energy. The project will use approximately 8.4 million cubic yards of sediment dredged from the Mississippi River. A single construction phase will be used to maximize cost effectiveness. The estimated construction duration is 26 months. Bids are expected to be solicited by NOAA in 2021.

Slide 38:

Moving on to RP #4: back in July 2018, the trustees released Final RP/EA #4 allocating approximately $38M for recreational use projects and approximately $9.5M in projects designed to help to restore and

enhance water quality in the state's coastal watersheds by reducing nutrient and nonpoint source pollution runoff.

Slide 39:

We will touch on the Nutrient Reduction (nonpoint source) projects first. RP 4 approved 4 Nutrient Reduction (Nonpoint Source) projects. These projects have budgets ranging from $1.0M to $3.0M dollars.

Slide 40:

Each of these projects are being implemented by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) in partnership with multiple agencies and programs. Each of these projects will move through multiple phases as outlined on this slide. Each project is currently in the third phase of development which is Implementing Baseline Water Quality Monitoring. Additional phases are planned for later this calendar year.

Slide 41:

Two of the projects focus on nutrient reduction on dairy farms in St Helena, Tangipahoa and Washington parishes. Each of these projects have a $1.0M budget and the USDA is partnering with the Capitol Resource Conservation and Development Area Council and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality for implementation.

Slide 42:

A third project is nutrient reduction on cropland and grazing land in Bayou Folse. This project has a $2.5M budget. USDA is partnering with the Barataria Terrebonne national estuary program and the LA DEQ. The last is Winter water holding on cropland in Vermillion and Cameron Parishes and development of agricultural best management practices. This is the largest of the four projects with a $3.0M budget. The partnering agencies for this project are The Nature Conservancy and Ducks Unlimited. As stated, each of these projects move through developmental phases. The Project guidelines and outreach plans have been developed for all four of these projects. We are scheduled to have landowner agreements in place and begin implementation by the end of this calendar year.

Slide 43:

Restoration Plan 4 also evaluated and approved 19 additional Recreational Use Projects across the state. This plan was completed in July of 2018.

Slide 44:

This map shows the locations of the rec use projects approved in RPEA #4 regionally across the state. These 19 projects have a total implementation budget of approximately $38 million. These projects can be grouped into 4 main categories. All of these projects are in various stages of E&D or Construction:

1. State and Federal Parks projects – The allocation to state and federal parks in Louisiana was approximately $16.2 Million.
2. Wildlife Management Areas and Refuge projects - $13.6 Million was allocated to 7 projects on Louisiana WMAs and Refuge Areas.

3. RP #4 also focused on the enhancement and improvement of fishing access in coastal Louisiana, allocating approximately $4 Million to 4 projects intended to improve fishing access in St. Mary, St. Charles and Jefferson Parishes

4. Education and Outreach Projects - 2,000,000 was allocated to provide and enhance recreational and educational opportunities in Lafitte LA for the creation of The Wetlands Center

Slide 45:

Restoration Plan #5 was completed just last month in August. This Plan focused on the restoration of two living coastal and marine resources – marine mammals and oysters.

Slide 46:

One project approved in the plan will focus on increasing capacity to respond to marine mammal strandings, with the other three projects focusing on oyster restoration. The marine mammal project will increase capacity and expand partnerships along the Louisiana coastline for marine mammal stranding response. Increased capacity will lead to improved rapid response to injured and dead dolphins and whales, and a better understanding of the causes of injury and/or death. A Louisiana-based stranding coordinator will build partnerships and conduct outreach for the project. Finally, the project will provide infrastructure, equipment, and supplies needed for stranding and rehabilitation. The estimated cost of this project is $3,095,628. This project will be led by NOAA in partnership with other federal and state trustees on the Louisiana TIG. The first of the three oyster projects will be to enhance oyster recovery utilizing brood reefs.

1. A network of oyster reefs will be constructed to increase spawning oyster populations.

- This project will be done in two phases, the first includes construction of multiple reefs in the Mozambique Point and Petit Pass/Bay Boudreaux areas, all in in St. Bernard Parish.
- The second phase will identify and construct additional spawning stock reefs in areas of Louisiana public oyster grounds.
- All constructed reefs from this project would be closed to harvest, but located near harvesting areas to promote habitat connectivity.
- Estimated cost of this project is $9,701,447.

2. Oyster reefs will be created through placement of limestone cultch material.

- Material will be placed in two locations, the first is a 200-acre site in the Grand Banks area of Mississippi Sound.
- The second location is at a 200-acre site in Caillou Lake Public Oyster Seed Reservation.
- Also, additional reefs will be constructed in areas of Louisiana public oyster grounds with conditions that are suitable for oyster propagation.
- Harvest at these sites will be closed until certain performance criteria are met.
- Estimated cost of this project is $10,070,000.

3. Funding will also be provided to support operations at the Michael C. Voisin Oyster Hatchery in Grand Isle, Louisiana.

- Project activities include production, deployment, and monitoring of hatchery-produced oysters onto established reefs within Louisiana's public oyster areas that are low-producing or in need of rehabilitation.
- The hatchery estimates production of at least 500 million oyster larvae per year.
- Estimated cost of this project is $5,850,000.

All three of these oyster projects are being implemented by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

Slide 47:

Restoration Plan #6 was completed in April 2020. The selected projects are intended to continue the process of using restoration funding to restore and conserve wetlands, coastal, and nearshore habitats injured by the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill. The total estimated cost of the selected projects is approximately $209 million.

Slide 48:

West Grand Terre Beach Nourishment and Stabilization project will create and restore beach habitat, dune habitat, and intertidal marsh habitat and protects shoreline along Barataria Pass and Barataria Bay on West Grand Terre Island in Jefferson Parish. The estimated total project cost is $92,500,000.This project was advertised for construction on Tuesday May 12, 2020. Construction activities are expected to begin soon. Here you see fort Livingston on the western end of WGT island at Barataria Pass.

Slide 49:

A second project is the Golden Triangle Marsh Creation project is in the eastern portion of the Golden Triangle Marsh and is adjacent to New Orleans, Louisiana, and the surrounding communities in Orleans Parish and St. Bernard Parish. The project will restore approximately 800 acres of broken marsh and open water through marsh creation to help buffer storm surge and provide estuarine habitat for Lake Borgne in Orleans and St. Bernard Parishes. The estimated cost of the project is $50,000,000. We anticipate a late November advertisement date.

Slide 50:

Biloxi Marsh Living Shoreline project will create oyster barrier reef along eastern shore of Biloxi Marsh to provide oyster habitat, reduce erosion, and prevent further marsh deterioration in Jefferson Parish. The Biloxi Marsh Living Shoreline Project is located directly adjacent to the already constructed PO-0148 Living Shoreline Demonstration Project (pictured). Approximately 9 to 11 miles of oyster barrier reef will be installed along the eastern shoreline of Biloxi Marsh, providing oyster habitat, reducing wave erosion, and preventing further marsh degradation. The estimated cost of this project is $66,600,000 and is currently in the final stages of design.

Slide 51:

One of the restoration types for the LA TIG set aside funds for is Monitoring and Adaptive Management. Monitoring is repeated data collection that allows us to notice changes and trends in a project or an ecosystem. This allows us to measure project success and our progress towards meeting the DWH restoration goals. Adaptive management is a process involving fine-tuning both the restoration projects and the entire restoration program over time, based on monitoring results and improved scientific understanding. The process creates an expanding base of knowledge that improves current and future restoration decision-making and further refines which restoration approaches are most effective for different resources and environmental settings. Adaptive management encourages an integrated and flexible approach to restoration by using solutions that incorporate changing and uncertain conditions. This year, the LA TIG made progress on six DWH Monitoring and Adaptive Management efforts.

Slide 52:

The first project - in April of this year, the LA TIG released a report called "Louisiana Adaptive Management Status and Improvement Report: Vision and Recommendations." This report identifies opportunities to improve adaptive management of the Louisiana restoration program by linking monitoring efforts across restoration programs, formalizing adaptive management process, and focusing on ecosystem outcomes. It was written by more than 50 authors from Trustee agencies and the coordinating Water Institute of the Gulf. This project was funded at just over $913,000. The second project was the development of an LA TIG programmatic MAM Strategy that directly addresses many of the key findings identified in the Adaptive Management report. The Trustee agencies, facilitated by the Water Institute of the Gulf, are refining Louisiana-specific restoration objectives to support the Gulf-wide Programmatic Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan (or PDARP) goals. This process includes:

1. Outlining the role of adaptive management in our restoration planning and program management.
2. Identifying monitoring and adaptive management priorities that support our restoration planning, implementation, and evaluation.
3. Informing decision making for prioritization and funding of MAM activities.
4. Outlining a process to ensure public transparency.

The TIG authorized $507k in MAM funds in January 2020 to facilitate this effort.

Slide 53:

The third project is Secretive Marsh Bird Monitoring. This 4-year project will address significant informational needs (e.g., overall secretive marshbird (SMB) population numbers, predictive SMB habitat relationships, benefits to SMBs provided by coastal restoration projects, and key features that could be added to coastal restoration projects to benefit SMBs to facilitate future LA TIG restoration planning and implementation activities for this suite of species. The LA TIG authorized $1,441,421 in MAM funds for this work in June 2019. Examples of secretive marsh birds include Common Moorhens, Least Bitterns, Purple Gallinules, Clapper Rails.

Slide 54:

Additional MAM projects include:

Fisheries sampling gear comparison: In July of this year, the TIG released a report called "*Gear Comparison Study for Sampling Nekton in Barataria Basin Marshes."* The TIG funded this field study to compare nekton (anything that can move on its own) sampling gear to understand the trade-offs. Some are more effective than others depending on the parameter of interest (density, abundance, species richness, and assemblages) and they also have varying costs and labor requirements. Fisheries Independent Monitoring Program: The LA TIG agreed to partially support the ongoing Louisiana coastwide Fisheries-Independent Monitoring Program (FIMP), which provides valuable data for the nearshore habitats and resources targeted for NRDA restoration, including oysters, nekton, and prey resources (e.g., shrimps, crab, and fishes.) The LA TIG will provide $3,951,192 in MAM funds over a 3-year period (July 2020-June 2023).

Slide 55:

Lastly, the Coastwide Reference Monitoring System: The LA TIG agreed to partially support another ongoing coastal monitoring program using MAM funds, because the data are vitatly important to our restoration planning and evaluation efforts. The Coastwide Reference Monitoring System (CRMS) is a monitoring system that initiated in 2016 by the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act (CWPPRA) program. Datasets from this monitoring program include site-specific hydrology, vegetation, soils and elevation change data; and coastwide aerial photography, vegetation cover, and elevation. We use the data to monitor the effectiveness of restoration actions at multiple, scales from individual projects to the influence of projects on the entire coastal landscape. The trustees will support this effort to a tune of $11,722,399 in MAM funds over a 3-year period.

Slide 56:

As you can see, the Louisiana TIG has made great progress to date. We've told you about what we've done, so let's talk briefly about what we have planned moving forward.

Slide 57:

As stated earlier, if draft RP 1.2 has been completed. This plan includes 2 large scale marsh and ridge restoration and shoreline protection and nourishment projects will be constructed with an estimated fully funded cost of approximately $224,000,000. We hope to have the plan finalized by the end of the year and move those projects to construction. The LA TIG has also recently released Draft RP 7 which focuses on WCNH and Birds. The Draft Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment #7 proposes five preferred alternatives. Three projects would be selected for engineering and design (E&D) and two for construction. The proposed projects include three under the Wetlands, Coastal, and Nearshore Habitats restoration type: (1) Bird's Foot Delta Hydrologic Restoration project (E&D), (2) Terrebonne Basin Ridge and Marsh Creation Project: Bayou Terrebonne Increment (full implementation), and (3) Grande Cheniere Ridge Marsh Creation (full implementation); and two under the Birds restoration type for engineering and design: (1) Isle au Pitre Restoration in upper St. Bernard Parish (E&D), and (2) Houma Navigation Canal (HNC) Island Restoration in lower Terrebonne Parish (E&D). The approximate cost to implement the LA TIG's proposed action (five preferred alternatives) in Draft RP/EA #7 is $234,100,000. The public meeting for this Plan was held last week on September 3, 2020 and the public comment period closes on September 22, 2020. We intend to complete this Plan by the end of the year.

And finally, The LA TIG continues to consider one or more project alternatives consistent with the large-scale marsh creation approach evaluated in the Barataria Basin Strategic Restoration Plan and is currently working on RP 3.2 evaluating project alternatives related to the proposed Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion.

Slide 58:

So just a few takeaways I'd like to offer from this presentation: As we stated before, Louisiana will receive $5.0B in restoration dollars through NRDA through 2031. The is specific to the LA TIG, and does not include NRD dollars that may come to the state through the RW or Open Ocean TIG's. The state has allocated almost $1.5B to date. Inclusive of Phase 1 and Phase 2 plans, the TIG has completed eleven independent restoration plans to date. This is all been accomplished since the 2016 global settlement. Including the multiple MAM activities the TIG has undertaken, we have completed or initiated 57 individual projects.

Slide 59:

And finally, here's a quick visual interpretation of the projects and their respective locations that we have completed or are in planning, engineering & design, or construction. The Louisiana Trustees take the responsibility for expenditure of the DWH NRD funds very seriously, and we are very proud of our accomplishments to date. So, as you've seen, a lot of good work has been completed to date. We are very busy in Louisiana and will be so for quite some time to come.

Slide 60:

As a reminder, the meeting materials can be found online at these websites. So, with that, I'll turn it over to Gabriella for our public comment period.

Slide 61:

Thanks Maury. It's now time for the comment portion of the webinar, if you haven't already please use the Questions box on the right side of your screen to enter a comment for Trustee staff. Comments will be read on the webinar as time allows. The trustees will not respond to comments during this webinar, but your input will be considered as the trustees continue planning and implementation efforts. We'll pause for a minute to wait for comments to come in. We will also summarize the comments we received today and post the summary to the TIG website. Thank you all for your comments, I'll now turn it back to Maury Chatellier to wrap up the webinar.

Slide 62:

On behalf of the Louisiana Trustee Implementation Group, I want to thank you all for attending our 2019 Annual Louisiana Trustee Implementation Group Public Meeting. We hope that you found the information helpful and informative. We also appreciate your interest in our ongoing efforts to restore for the natural resource damages caused by the historic DWH oil spill. We will continue with our restoration efforts and continue to keep you updated as we make progress. You can find the materials for today's meeting on these websites where you will also find useful information about our progress and ongoing efforts.