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Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA), Louisiana,
Ecosystem Restoration;
Barrier Island Restoration, Marsh Creation, and River Diversion,
Barataria Basin Feasibility Study

NOTICE OF STUDY INITIATION

The Study.

In March 2000, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District and the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, Coastal Restoration Division initiated a feasibility study for restoration in coastal Louisiana based on the *Coast 2050 Plan*. This study is cost shared equally between the Federal Government and the State of Louisiana. The primary purpose of this feasibility study is ecosystem restoration. Secondary benefits, such as flood control, navigation, and recreation, will be estimated in the study, but ecosystem restoration will be the basis for recommending plans.

The Louisiana coastal area is comprised of nine major basins, which is covered by the LCA Study Authority (Fig. 1). The Barataria Basin, which has the highest deterioration rate along the coast, will be the first basin for study. This study area includes parts of the following parishes: Assumption, St. James, St. John the Baptist, St. Charles, Lafourche, Jefferson, and Plaquemines (Fig. 1).

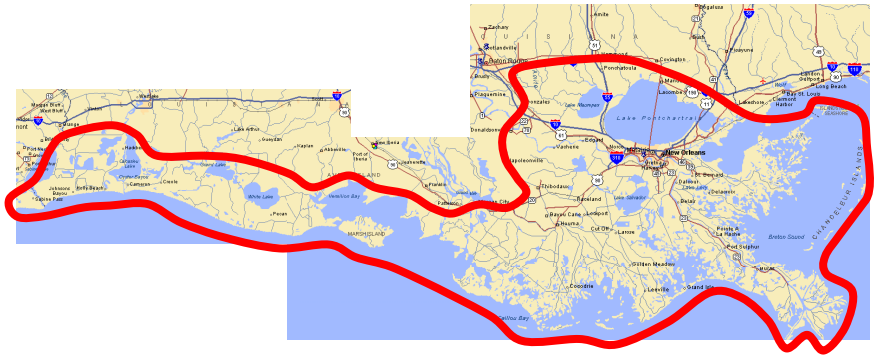

Fig. 1. Louisiana Coastal Area Feasibility Study Area

Based on the Coast 2050 Plan, Fig. 2 depicts the restoration and protection strategies near the fringe of the Gulf of Mexico that will be evaluated during the Barataria Basin Study.

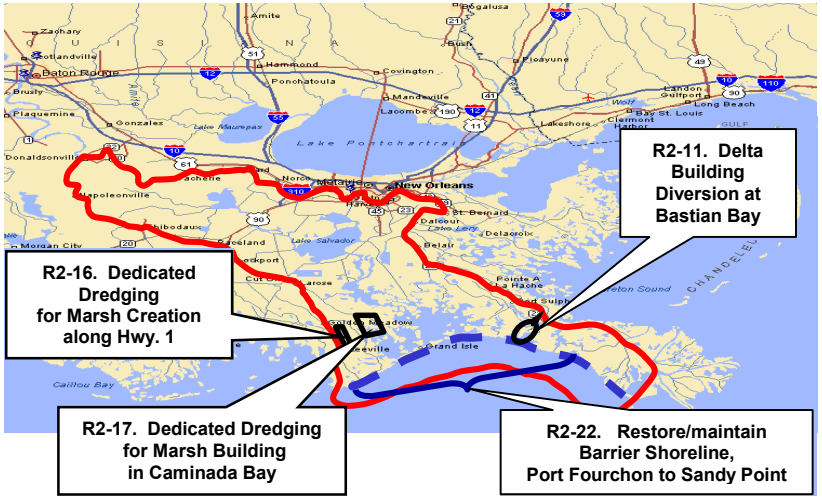

Fig. 2. Barataria Basin Study Area

The Purpose and Progression of Study.

A report that addresses barrier island restoration, marsh creation, and river diversion along the gulf fringe of the Barataria Basin will be published requesting authorization and funding in the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2002.

During this study, computer models will be developed for the purpose of addressing remaining Coast 2050 strategies of the Barataria Basin related to hydrology and hydraulics. These models will be geared towards simulating the input, movement, and circulation of water, salinity, nutrients, and sediment in the basin.

The Study Process.

The objective of this study is ecosystem restoration. The ecosystem restoration study approach involves:

- Formulation of environmental study alternatives that address the problems, needs, and opportunities described in the *Coast 2050 Plan*
- Evaluation of effectiveness of alternative plans in achieving Coast 2050 strategies
- Public input to study process
- Estimation of ancillary benefits (economics, recreation, cultural, social)
- Recommendation of a plan based on comparison of alternatives

Public Involvement.

The Corps of Engineers and the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources will be conducting public meetings at key points during the study. At these meetings, presentations will be delivered regarding study progress-to-date, as well as to solicit comments on the study. Notices will be distributed to announce public meetings in advance. Initiation of other basin studies under the Louisiana Coastal Area study authority will be announced in the future.

Public involvement is an important part of the study. We welcome your input. In order to facilitate this, the first public meeting is scheduled from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on March 28, 2000 in the Century Room of the John L. Guidry Stadium located on Audubon Drive of Nicholls State University Campus, Thibodaux, LA 70301. The entrance to the Century Room is a red door under the stadium.

In this meeting, we will present an overview of the study scope, objectives, and schedule. Thereafter, detailed study area maps showing draft conceptual restoration plans will be reviewed for public comment. Comments on the study and draft conceptual plans from this meeting will be considered for shaping the investigations.

During the course of the study, please address correspondence to:

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Please bring this notice to the attention of parties known to have interest in water resources related problems in the study area.

Thomas F. Julich
Colonel, U.S. Army
District Engineer