



# News Release

## US Army Corps of Engineers®

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Mississippi River Commission  
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## MRC holds meeting; the Louisiana Coastal Area Ecosystem Restoration Study

VICKSBURG, MISS., December 15, 2004 – The Mississippi River Commission (MRC) held a meeting today concerning the Louisiana Coastal Area Ecosystem Restoration Study Report. The study, commonly referred to as LCA, is designed to map out a strategy for restoring Louisiana's nationally significant coastal wetlands.

The purpose of the meeting was to provide the commission members information on the LCA study in order for them to make an informed and prudent decision as to their support of the report and recommendations.

Commission members present at the meeting were Brig. Gen. Robert Crear (President-designee of the Mississippi River Commission and Division Commander of the Mississippi Valley Division), Mr. Sam Angel and Mr. Clifford Smith. Mr. R.D. James and Brig. Gen. William Grisoli participated via teleconference.

During the one-and-a-half-hour meeting, the commission reviewed the project, discussed the features and issues, concurred in the findings and recommendation of the New Orleans District Engineer, and voted unanimously to recommend implementation. The next step in the process is for the MRC Report to be transmitted to the Corps' Headquarters in Washington, D.C., for inclusion in the Chief of Engineer's Report. The Chief's Report marks a significant step in the process; if approved, the package will be forwarded to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works for transmitting to Congress.

This study has received unprecedented support and collaboration between federal, state, partners, other agencies and groups and the general public. All federal agencies have provided a letter of support for the project. "I am very impressed with the work of the interagency team and the universal support this project has garnered," stated Brig. Gen. Robert Crear.

The study area, which includes the Louisiana coastal area from Mississippi to Texas, is influenced by the Mississippi River. The river's resources are available to contribute to the restoration of the coastal ecosystem. The federal government and state of Louisiana have been conducting ecosystem restoration efforts for the past 14 years under the Breaux Act.

The lessons learned and extensive experience gained from past restoration and research efforts have been applied in the LCA Study and can continue to be applied in a systematic way to develop and implement a coast wide plan for addressing the land loss problem and critical needs facing the area.

The recommended plan has seven major components, including five critical restoration projects, a science and technology program, and a series of demonstration projects described as follows:

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2-2-2/LCA Study

**Near-Term Critical Restoration Features.** The recommended plan includes a number of critical restoration projects, five of which are recommended for near-term continued study, design, and implementation. These five projects address the most critical ecological needs of the coastal area and address a range of effects essential for success in restoring the coast. The five near-term critical restoration features are:

1. Mississippi River Gulf Outlet Environmental Restoration Features
2. Small Diversion at Hope Canal
3. Barataria Basin Barrier Shoreline Restoration, Caminada Headland, Shell Island
4. Small Bayou Lafourche Reintroduction
5. Medium Diversion at Myrtle Grove with Dedicated Dredging

**Science & Technology Program.** The recommended plan includes a Science and Technology Program over the initial 10 years of the LCA program. The major goal of the program would be to decrease scientific and engineering uncertainties of restoration efforts and to optimize restoration opportunities.

**Demonstration Projects.** The recommend plan includes funding over a 10-year period for demonstration projects to be developed by the Science and Technology Program. These projects will cost a maximum of \$25 million each.

“I am extremely proud of what we’ve accomplished in the last two-and-a-half years,” said Jon Porthouse, Planning Section Manager with the Dept of Natural Resources, State of Louisiana. “This study is the culmination of a strong scientific effort that will help us succeed in the future. I look forward to beginning the hard work that’s ahead of us.”

More information on the LCA Study can be found at <http://www.lca.gov>.

The Mississippi River Commission has statutory authority to operate on the Mississippi River from its headwaters at Lake Itasca, Minn., to Head of Passes, La. This authority is dependant upon congressional authorization and funding of projects. The projects considered and implemented by the MRC may be part of the existing Mississippi River and Tributaries (MR&T) project or separate projects. The MR&T project, authorized by Congress following the 1927 flood, is the comprehensive flood control and navigation plan for the lower Mississippi valley, below Cape Girardeau, Mo. District offices located in St. Paul, Minn.; Rock Island, Ill.; St. Louis, Mo.; Memphis, Tenn.; Vicksburg, Miss.; and New Orleans, La., conduct the programs and activities overseen by the commission.



**(l to r) MRC Commissioners Mr. Sam Angel, Brig. Gen. Robert Crear and Mr. Clifford Smith. As part of the meeting process, each MRC Commissioner asked questions of the LCA team members.**