In The Matter Of:

La. Coastal Meeting

Notice of Intent & Public Scoping Meetings
April 17, 2012

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LOUISIANA COASTAL AREA
MISSISSIPPI RIVER HYDRODYNAMIC AND DELTA MANAGEMENT STUDY & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Notice of Intent & Public Scoping Meetings

Cutoff, Louisiana

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The above-entitled cause came in for a meeting at the Larose Civic Center, 307 East 5th Street, Cutoff, Louisiana, on Tuesday, April 17, 2012, commencing at 6:30 p.m.

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BEFORE:

TIFFENY SUIRE GALLARDO
Certified Court Reporter
In and For the State of
Louisiana

A P P E A R A N C E S

LEE MUELLER, USACE, MODERATOR
RENEE SANDERS, CPRA OF LA
DANNY WIEGAND, USACE
NATHAN DAYAN, USACE
BREN HAASE, CPRA OF LA

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I N D E X

P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. LEE MUELLER:

Good evening everybody. My name is Lee Mueller. I work in the Public Affairs Office with the Army Corps of Engineers.

I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce Lafourche Parish President Charlotte Randolph.

PARISH PRESIDENT RANDOLPH:

Thank you, Lee. It's good to see people out here of all walks of life because this is going to impact us in so many different ways. This is the beginning of an exciting study that will allow us to restore our coast in a way that is acceptable to the scientific community, to every community involved.

So the opportunity needs to be one we take advantage of and certainly contribute to. We need to include our comments. Kerry, if you have a comment and anyone else too. Please for those who you know are not in attendance

tonight, please alert them to the fact that they can comment on this, despite the fact that they're not here, and that any input will be welcome.

This collaboration is an exciting one. One with our state representatives, as well as our federal partners in this. So I welcome you here tonight, and hope that you'll continue to be a part of this process. This is very important to Lafourche, as well as Louisiana. So thank you again for coming.

MS. LEE MUELLER:

Thank you. I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce some team members we have here with us. From CPRA, Bren Haase, he's the Planner Manager; Mr. Wes Leblanc, he's the Program Manager; Renee Sanders, the Study Manager, Micaela Coner, also Study Manager. Where's Chuck Perrodin? He's the Public Information Director. It looks like he stepped out.

And from the Corps, we have Bill

Hicks, the Project Manager, Danny Wiegand, the Planner, and Nathan Dayan, the Environmental Branch.

As you can see, this is the third of six public scoping meetings to get this study started. It's a large-scale long-term study. So your public input is very important.

Tonight, we'll start with a presentation. First, we'll go over the Louisiana Coastal Area Ecosystem Restoration Program. Then the team will discuss some details regarding the Mississippi River Hydrodynamic & Delta Management Study. And then Nathan Dayan will go over and the National Environmental Policy Act Public Scoping Process.

Now, we understand that our presentation can often stir up a lot of questions. So for that reason, we'll have a question and answer session. Sara McLaughlin in the back will walk around with a mic and please raise your hand, and she'll get to you. The team

will do the best they can to answer any questions you may have.

Now, if you don't have a question but you do have a comment, a complaint, compliment, maybe, we will have a formal scoping session. This is your opportunity to submit comments. We have a court reporter with us. That comment will be considered a formal comment on the record. So that is your opportunity to really submit your public input in a formal setting.

So just to reiterate why you're here tonight is to kick off the study and to gather your input on the development of the study.

So with that, I'd like to turn it over to Renee Sanders, Study Manager with CPRA.

(PRESENTATION BY RENEE SANDERS)

Welcome. On behalf of the State, we're super excited to work in conjunction with the Corps on the project. As everyone mentioned, this is the first long-term large-scale

restoration project. We're just very excited to get started.

I'm going to start with an overview of the LCA Project. The LCA, which stands for the Louisiana Coastal Area, was a project, kind of, a coastwide study that was finalized in late 2004, beginning of 2005. It was written to address both near-term issues, as well as longer term issues.

The report identified six long-term studies. This project will combine two of those studies. The name of one of the studies is the Hydrodynamic Project, and the other one is the Delta Management Project.

The hydrodynamic portion will focus primarily on modeling in the river, currents, and sediment patterns. And then the delta management side will look at what is occurring in the basin. So where can we use the sediments, kind of, identifying that happy medium between where is the sediment in the river, and how do we best utilize it in

the basin.

This project map shows the 15 near-term study projects for the LCA project, 1 through 15 are the 15 near-term, most of which have not been built. Two of them on the map have been, and that's Caernarvon and Davis Pond.

The other projects are in various stages of completion. Some of them are in design phase, which includes White Ditch, Blind River, the Amite Modification Study, the Terrebonne study as well. And then some are still in the feasibility stage, which is where we're evaluating the benefits and the impacts to the project. And some examples of those are Myrtle Grove. And there are two modification projects, one for Caernarvon and one for Davis Pond, as well, to look at maximizing the outputs for those structures.

This map is the study area and extends from the Mouth of the Gulf of

Mexico up to Vicksburg. The reason it goes to Vicksburg is we have some in-river modeling that extends that far to capture some of the complexities around the Old River Control Structure.

You can see there's a little portion along the southwest. And that's to capture some of that longshore drift that occurs around the Gulf of Mexico. The map shows some of the structures that have been built and some that are still under design or in feasibility.

The project area is going to be smaller. It's going to be more defined, and it's going to be based on the potential locations of maximizing that sediment output with what's occurring in the river. So this is a large study area. And once we get to the point of picking locations, it will be zoomed in and will be more concentrated, and we'll start looking at soil conditions and water depth, and that sort of thing.

This is an overview, more some quick facts on the project. The project was authorized in WRDA. And WRDA stands for the Water Resources Development Act. The project will have an Environmental Impact Statement, and that's a typical output from a federal project and that identifies the benefits and the impacts the projects. It looks at cost and benefit analysis. Some of you may be familiar with some other environmental Impact Statements that have occurred. This will be what they call a tiered off version. It will be a subset of what happened in the 2004 report. So it will be more detailed for this particular project than what was identified in the 2004 report.

There's a cost share agreement that was signed in August 2011. And it evaluates the project or identifies, it's list the projects is going to take about five years to completion. It's $25.3 million. And that's a 50/50 cost

share between the state and the federal government. The 50/50 cost share is almost a symbolic representation of how we feel the study should go. That both partners are equal in evaluation and analysis of the project.

As I mentioned before, it's a combination of two studies together. So throughout the presentation, you will hear specifics on the hydrodynamic portion, which is the modeling, primarily. And then the delta management, which is where that sediment and nutrients is going to be located in the basin.

So the hydrodynamic portion is to evaluate what's occurring in the Mississippi River system. And simply put, that's to look at quantifying how much sediment and where the river resources are available, sediment nutrients, as well as freshwater. And then evaluate or develop tools to evaluate those resources over time, as well as spatially. And then the third

thing when I say evaluate, to determine how to best implement the restoration strategies to maximize the use of the available riverine resources.

Traditionally, the river has been managed for two functions, which is flood risk reduction and navigation. And this study is going to elevate the importance of ecosystem restoration. Put it in more of a level playing field with the other services that the river provides.

The delta management portion of this study is going to identify and evaluate features for a sustainable delta coast. And the 2004 report, it said that it would identify diversions greater than 50,000 cfs. That's cubic feet per second. And this study will evaluate all realms of possibilities, whether it's above or below.

The other thing mentioned in the 2004 report is that it would analyze alternative navigation channel alignments. That's something that's

still part of this project. We understand that's a huge undertaking. That's not a phrase that is simply put out there. That will require a lot of analysis, but that's still a part of this project.

The other restoration measures that we have identified could be dedicated dredging, marsh creation, some barrier island restoration. The study will be heavily influenced by what's included in the 2012 Coastal Master Plan that the state put together.

The three things that the Master Plan is going to help us with for this study is to better inform the placement of restoration, large-scale restoration strategies, whether it's diversions or marsh creation. But where exactly do we put this. It will also help us define the level of analysis that's needed for construction of these large-scale projects. And it will help us provide the information necessary for Congressional authorizations for these

projects.

So the final deliverable for this delta management portion is one Environmental Impact Statement. Just to be clear that the benefits and impacts will be put in one report.

With that, I'd like to turn it over to Danny.

(PRESENTATION BY DANNY WIEGAND)

MR. DANNY WIEGAND:

I'M Danny Wiegand. I'm with the Corps of Engineers. I am one of the planners on this study. Cherie Price also works in my office, and she's going to be leading this study along with me, in case y'all run into her on other studies. But she and I are both tag-teaming these presentations over the three-week period.

Similar to Renee's thoughts, we are very excited to initiate this study. This is the first large-scale long-term study to come out of the 2004 report, and we're excited to get this rolling, and we're excited to hear from y'all

tonight on your thoughts and ideas to present what we've thought of so far.

In the Corps' planning process, whenever we're authorized to initiate the study or a study, one of the first things we need to do is, obviously, there's some problems in the study area that map that Renee showed you. So we've taken a stab at some problems that we think are happening in the study area, and we will be developing in coordination with our project delivery team, which is made up of people form CPRA, the Corps, as well as other agencies and other organizations. Let's step through some of these.

And, again, we're here to get your feedback. So if you see something missing, or if you see something mischaracterized, let us know. We're here to take that information and try to build on it and add value to what we already initiated. So chime in later.

The first problem that we have outlined. So I like to look at this

problem is the river side. Renee pointed this out earlier. This was two separate studies: the hydrodynamic study and the delta management study in the 2004 report. Those have been combined into one study.

The hydrodynamic portion was the river side, looking at the dynamics of the river, resources available, and just the complexities that we know exist in the river.

The delta management side is, once those resources get into the basin, what happens with the hydrology and the dynamics of which can be very different on that side from what's in the river. But these are combined.

So this first problem is tackling what's on the river side. So Historically, we have probably focused on navigation and flood risk reduction more than we have for ecosystem restoration. As Renee said, we are elevating ecosystem restoration be on a level playing field with the other two

services. So we have identified a problem that that lack of understanding and what resources are available is something that we need to address as we move forward.

Getting into the delta management side, this is nothing knew to many of you. Having conversations with a few of you back there. I know you know we are experiencing subsidence and land loss at an alarming rates. And we all want to see something done about it. So we recognize -- I don't think there will be any contradictions to this problem being out there.

Another problem that we face on that delta management side is that it's a very complex large dynamic system. And I know some of you are very familiar with that as well, the fishermen and other people, who rely on the basin side to provide your income and support your life, recognize there is a very dynamic and complex system. So we are lacking in understanding of

some of those things.

We have a lot of data on hand, and there's been lots of studies done over the years that we will definitely look to to inform us as we move forward. But we definitely have some data gaps that we want to try to fill in as we move forward.

And then, lastly, this is something that I think has gotten a lot more press in the recent years. But sea-level rise is an issue, and it's becoming more of a thought in front of people's minds because they realize that it's happening, and it's time to do something about it.

So now that we've identified some problems, let's start looking on the bright side and look for some opportunities. We want to move forward and figure out how we're going to approach those problems.

First thing we'd like to do with this study is, I'd like to think of this as an inventory. We're going to

do a lot of analysis complex modeling on the river side, on the bay side. And we see this as an opportunity to really get an inventory of data, science, and other tools that we can develop and then they are going to be developed and out there and pull all this together in this first large-scale effort in the coastal area.

Second opportunity is to address that first problem I talked about from the previous side. We want more to more effectively manage those river resources. And we want to do this in a sustainable way, and we want to do it in a way that supports the three services that we talked about: ecosystem restoration, navigation, and flood risk reduction. We want to get all of those in balance and recognizing that they're all very important to coastal Louisiana and figure out how to find some synergy between the three of them as we move forward.

We have an opportunity here on a

large-scale. There are lots of smaller scale projects out there on the ground already where we have some reconnection of the river to the bay side. But we want to look at it on a large scale, how we're going to reconnect those resources in the river, get them into the basin where they're needed. And then make that a sustainable system.

We also have an opportunity here to - sustainability is kind of a key word in these last two bullets. I think we have an opportunity here to influence the processes where we can create these new land forms and approach it in a more sustainable way and make sure they're not just here five years or a very short period. We want to identify ways to make it there long-term and make it more a permanent part of the landscape.

And lastly, in doing that, we're going to need to really consider the hydrology on the basin side. There's some things that we can do, and we

recognize that. And it just kind of goes without saying, the better the hydrology is the better your wetlands are going to be.

So after we looked through or work with the team to develop these problems and opportunities, we came up with a study goal, and we hope y'all like it. It's essentially a lot of the things I just talked about kind of boiled down to one statement. It's getting those resources out of the river into the bay side and keeping them there and maintaining those three services we talked about: navigation, flood risk reduction, and ecosystem restoration.

So how we're going to get there. We have this grand goal. To get there, we have come up with three objectives. First thing is to identify those resources and quantify what those resources are, what the availability of those resources is to us so that we can put them into the basins where they're needed and then do that in conjunction

with maintaining the services of the navigation and flood risk reduction without jeopardizing those services.

Second, this study is not only going to help this one single state. This is going to establish a more programmatic framework for moving forward with coastal restoration. Again, this is a large-scale look at the coast where, as a lot of the previous studies have been the near-term, kind of, smaller scope, a little more narrow in focus. But this is going to give us an opportunity to look at a systemwide approach and watershed approach. And figure out how to establish that framework making decisions down the road, not just for the study.

And lastly, again, the word "sustainable" seems to be a buzz word lately. But we want to see on the basin side, we want to see those sediments and nutrients and everything that go along with it to support

healthy coastal areas. We want to see those get in there. We want to see increase in elevation, and we want to make it stay as best we can, sustainability. So that's a key part of this study.

We've got a lot of work to do. But we know that a lot of people are out there with a lot of information, such as yourselves. We look forward to hearing from you tonight and getting feedback on what you've seen and giving us feedback on things that you think would help us as we move forward.

With that, I turn it to Nathan.

(PRESENTATION BY NATHAN DAYAN)

MR. NATHAN DAYAN:

The main reason we're here tonight is the National Environmental Policy Act. It tells us that we have to go to the communities, get their information, and provide that information back to y'all and back to the decision-makers. That's what we're here for.

What we're doing, we're doing the

scoping process. That's coming to you early in the process and multiple times asking for your information, asking for the information that's out there, getting community as part of the project. Identify what resources out there that we might not know about because we're not experts on everything. Y'all are experts on your communities. Y'all are experts on the river. You know a lot. We've been doing it for a while, but we don't know everything until y'all tell us.

We're going to take all this information, all this modeling effort. We're going to prepare a document called an Environmental Impact Statement. That document is what's going to tell you benefits of the project and the impacts, the negatives, both. We're going to come back, send it out to the public, have more meetings. And y'all will get to inform the decision-makers in Washington. Is this a good idea, is this not a good

idea, what we did right, what we didn't do right. So this is your chance in the process, at the beginning of the process to give us that information for this document.

This is probably going to be a big shock right here. This is the schedule we're on. This schedule is long because this is a complex project, unfortunately. But we're going to keep ya'll involved during the process. The modeling work on the Mississippi River is going to take time. We got to go out there and get data; so it's a long process. But you're involved. Right now, you see scoping, today. You're involved. We're going to send that draft out to the public. You're involved again. Between there, have comments. You're involved.

What's the scoping process? We put a notice in the Federal Register that we're going to to this study. We're inviting y'all to participate. Again, it's for y'all to participate through

this whole process. We want to know what you have to say. You don't have anything to say, or you do and don't tell us, we don't know.

We're going to take this information from tonight's meeting and from the other meetings that we're having from information that you emailed to us, send us a fax, call us. Any information we get in, we're going to put it in a document called "Scoping Report," which will be sent out. In that report, it's going to say, these are the things of concerns by the citizens. And this is the section of the document that that information is going to be in so that you can go back and check on it. At least in the document now to say, you know what, I made this comments. Yeah, they talked about that information. So this is the first step in making sure we do our job.

Then we're going to have a little question and answer session. Then

we'll get back to the scoping process. Thank you.

MS. LEE MUELLER:

So like I said, Sara McLaughlin in the back, she has a walk-around mic. So we have a lot of information. Any questions you may have, go ahead and raise your hand.

We have a question up front.

(INFORMAL Q&A SESSION)

MR. EDDIE ST. PIERRE:

It's going to take you to 2015. That's too long. We're losing an acre every 42 minutes. If that takes to 2015, I live in downtown, I'm going to be flooded. Y'all need to tighten up. Go talk to the old fisherman and the old people around. They'll tell you. We need more freshwater coming down. Open the deal in Bayou Lafourche and Donaldsonville. Let that water flow.

Turn around and you want to stop the erosion, get the navy offered some ships to Grand Isle quite a few years ago. See if they still got them. Go

put them around the barrier islands and sink them. That will stop the erosion. There's a lot of stuff. It seems stupid but it works. All you got to do is just talk to these old people, the old fisherman. They'll tell you what it used to be like years ago. And we never had any problems.

And when the rigs came in, they started digging canals. Because of dry hole, everybody goes home, left the canal open. Shut that down. From now on, you dig a canal, you got to fill it back up if you don't have a well out there. Thank you.

MR. DANNY WIEGAND:

Thank you for your comment. We recognize that it is a long time frame up there, especially, given the - sorry, I'm a little soft-spoken - given the urgency that I know is felt out here in coastal communities.

We are looking for ways to streamline and get things through a little quicker. I would say that a lot

of the up-front work on the hydrodynamic side is, I think I touched on this in my talk, it's not just for this study. It's going to inform all other LCA projects that are ongoing, as well as ones that may be coming up in the future. And so we think that a lot of the tools that we're going to develop in the near-term on this study, the first part of those five years will help us make better decisions on these other projects that are ongoing.

MR. EDDIE ST. PIERRE:

Danos (phonetic), they were supposed to hire us. I got a $500, $600 radio system at my house that they gave us to keep when they call us to go plant rosos, grass, whatever it was that wanted. That's never been done. I think the money is there. But if that's part of the deal to help stop the erosion, let's get it done. Let's move this project forward. Quit playing around. An acre every 42 minutes, that's not good. That's not

good at all.

MR. BREN HAASE:

My name is Bren Haase. I work for the CPRA. I certainly take your comment to heart. I don't want the impression to be made that we're not doing anything else while this is going on. I want to emphasize that there's a tremendous amount of restoration activity that's going on that's going to be parallel with this study.

So we're not holding anything up and waiting on the study to get done before we decide what we're going to do in the future. There are 15 near-term projects identified within this program. All of those are moving in one way or another. There's the CWPPRA program, the CIAP program, a number of other restoration programs that are ongoing right now.

So certainly your comment is taken to heart by all of us up here. We need to do things faster, do things better. But I don't want there to be a

misunderstanding that we're waiting for this study to accomplish anything that we know we can accomplish now. Thank you.

MR. BOB BOOTH:

I'm Bob Booth. I live in Cutoff. This study seems to be somewhat of a repeat of other studies. Couldn't the study be shorter by incorporating some of the other things? And as the gentlemen says, we're losing a lot of land quickly. FEMA is coming in and telling us we have to build 16, maybe, 14, 12 feet in the air. Economic development is at a standstill.

I've been working with our great Parish President trying to put a project together. But if my basement of my front door of my business is going to look next door, and I'm going to step out on Walmart's roof, how can I do that. I got 150 acres I want to develop for this lady to put in an industrial park. But if I got to put 15 feet of dirt in the air for 150

acres, I can't afford that. We're giving money to Hugo Chavez. I guess maybe I can go borrow some from him.

But this is wrong what we're waiting, killing the beautiful place we live. There's a quick solution as I mentioned to him earlier. Take a vote for a large ship, dock it off of the Mississippi River. Set up what looks like a set of popiers and collect that sediment that's going. Dump it off into the back, just as it would be in an exhaust system for a truck. And that water goes into a barge. That barge has stair steps coming down. The dirt stops. The water runs out the back. I then take that barge over to Port Fourchon that needs space to fill, and the bottom of that barge opens up, and I drop that sediment. I've reduced the dead zone in the Gulf. I haven't affected any environmental impacts. I've built that dirt, and I recovered that dirt that's coming down the Mississippi.

Yes, you want to do it with a diversion. But if you do a major diversion to build this area up, I want to see what that Senator in New Orleans has got to say when there's not enough water to pull up boats up to the docks in New Orleans. She goes stop that project, just because you can't float anything to the port. Because you won't have enough water if you do a major diversion.

So you're going to do a minor diversion. That might mean that after a five-year study, when now 25 years in trying to protect ourselves. Thibodaux is going to the next - he's not going to have any land. I won't have any land. Thibodaux is going to be where you're docking the boats next. We need to get together as a group and listen to what we do down here.

She has some great ideas. She's worked hard to try to do everything for us. But we need to come together with people who's going to shorten studies

and give us some impact.

You could take from Leeville going across to Pointe-au-Chien, put in a rock jetty going across with weirs. Another set of rock jetties halfway behind it where boats can travel and come and go. You can stop all of that. You don't need to build up the levee structure any higher here. You have two levees here.

You can tell the Corp of Engineers, not the Corps of Engineers, but the other people, FEMA, that you don't have to build 16 feet in the air. Italy's doing it. They're over there with Venice that's sinking. They put in that structure. They put in boats and docks and barges that lift up and down and close when the water gets bad. They invented technologies available over there, spend it here.

But what you're doing is when you take from us build a levee, what 100 people, 150 people that had land. You take our land, build a levee. We're

getting 2 cents a cubic yard for the dirt that you're digging, not good. Walmart takes all their money, and they go off to Arkansas with it. I'm paying for the dirt at 2 cents a cubic yard as my rebate. But what's happened is Walmart is taking all the money. No skin in the game.

When you said it's time to get equal coming across, everybody should have some skin in the game. Everybody should be able to turn around and say, my house is here, I'm going to help protect it. But right now, it's only a few. When you take my dirt, you take my land, and there's no levee there, that sand is protecting me. But I'm still paying sales tax on that. I'm paying tax on that land every year. When Mike comes along and he says, okay, here's your taxes. I got to pay to that land that's underwater that's under that levee. Nobody's giving me a break. Took my land, didn't pay for it. And then you're going to come back

- the last lady that I was at over at the VFW, we talked about when the storm was just right, it would come in towards Terrebonne Bay and Terrebonne Parish. It would bounce off that levee and come back over towards our land. We're going to have two waters. One, the input water; and two, the rebound water. So they said, yeah, we're going to come back and we're going to top off your levee ever higher. Where is that dirt coming from. Me gain. It's not fair.

It should be some kind of crisis where everybody has something in the game. There's a lot of little things that we can do to save our land, beautiful land with beautiful people. But we need to come together and not study. I think the studies are over there. And he worked out in the marsh. He used to come across and take marsh buggies all the way from Golden Meadow to Pointe-au-Chien on land. It's not there. Because we invented the marsh

buggy. His daddy invented the marsh buggy. They used to drive them over across. Land is not there. Something needs to be done. And all of us are willing to help. We'll join whatever studies we have to. But we need to do it quickly. And it's not right. Thank you.

MR. BREN HAASE:

Thank you. Awful lot of good comments. So thank you there. I'll just add that we're not starting from scratch. Absolutely, you're right. There's a lot that's been studied ad nauseam. People are tired of studies. We understand that.

But we've got a lot of good work, particularly, on the bay side, delta management, type, impacts that we can build off on. One thing that hasn't been evaluated very well is what's going on in the river between the levees. And a big part of this is to evaluate that aspect of what happens when we turn the knob, so to speak, if

we remove a bunch of sediment via a pipeline to build marsh. Everybody can get behind that. Certainly, that's some thing we support, diversions, as well, potentially and any other number of potential alternatives on the bay side.

You're absolutely right. We know an awful lot about data. I think we can capitalize on the amount of work that's been done. But a big piece of this has to be that river side for the reasons you stated, navigation, obviously. We can't compromise navigation. That's just not going to happen. And flood control is the same way. Appreciate your comments.

MS. RENEE SANDERS?

So I have something to add really quick is that the modeling efforts that's going on both in the river and the bay side are existing models. So I want to make sure that everybody understands that we're building upon the information that we have, and that

we're not starting from scratch.

This effort is going to be able to combine the existing models together so that we can see both what's going on in the river and in the basin. So I hope that also addresses your concern that we're not starting from scratch. We're building upon existing information.

MS. LEE MUELLER:

Just to remind you that this is the question and answer session. We will have the scoping comment session where you can submit comments for the scoping report.

If you have a question, this would be a good time for them.

MR. DARRYL PAUL WARD:

Darryl Paul Ward, Garden of Eden, plants, food, and fuel. This is the water sediment diversion and nutrients. A place that's building a path forward with engineers, scientists, and educated by the new world tomorrow. Coastal wetland planning and protection is our gateway to our second story of

engineers, scientists, and natural awareness to more jobs and education of our Louisiana coastal areas.

Human and natural life of our coastal wetlands are the new future of using plants for food and fuel of new world to new. We are to harness freshwater diversion and marsh creation to restore barrier islands restoration with food and fuel plants to be a factor.

The question is: We have to allow the food plants and the fuel plants to grow to give the right to individuals to watch over and protect this land and to put some common sense into the protection of our future. That's the main thing that I wanted to say because we haven't come up with the answers to what the food is going to be or what the fuel is going to be.

So I'd like to be part of that to find out that answer as we go along to be part of this. I'm asking for this. I wrote a letter to the Governor Bobby

Jindal, and I wrote a letter to the Army Corps of Engineers and one to Barack Obama to see if I can help forward the food and the fuel. Thank you very much.

PARISH PRESIDENT CHARLOTTE RANDOLPH:

My name is Charlotte Randolph. And my question stems from our earlier conversation. There exists the potential for some funding to be provided to this area through the NRDA process from BP, optimistically, soon.

If you begin the study, are there aspects of the study that can be applied to projects prior to the completion of the study? What you will learn in this process. We don't want to wait until the study is over in order to complete the projects.

But will there be aspects of this process that we can apply to some of the projects we have planned already?

MR. DANNY WIEGAND:

In short, we, kind of, talked a little bit about this, especially,

earlier. There are going to be interim products through the process from this study, especially, the hydrodynamic side and in forming what we are going to be modeling. We got all the different models that we're doing on the river side looking at the nutrients, the sediment, and all the resources available that we're going to model from the river.

And so, yes, I do think there will be an opportunity for that information to be available to inform you as you move through your process. We are going to have an outreach component to this study through the five years where we come back to the communities and share where we are. So I think that might be an opportunity to share the information that we've got so far.

PARISH PRESIDENT CHARLOTTE RANDOLPH:

Benchmarks? Is that what you're thinking, some sort of benchmarks?

MR. DANNY WIEGAND:

Benchmarks as in - where we're

going to have yearly. We're planning to have yearly updates to the public on the study and where we are and what we've learned.

MR. BREN HAASE:

This is a big matzo ball, right. So it's certainly broken up - can everybody hear me?

Certainly, it's broken up into smaller pieces. And those pieces are the way we've designed or hope to design this is that those pieces will be useful independently. So that if we get down the road and whatever happens, and we can't move forward, at least we've got some useful product that can form the kinds of things you're talking about.

So the answer is yes.

MR. NATHAN DAYAN:

Just so you have an example of one of those. We have an LCA project, Myrtle Grove, that's ongoing parallel to this project. Part of the issue with the Myrtle Grove is what impact

will it have on navigation. One of the initial things that's coming out of this project in a model, one-dimensional model, a simple model of the Mississippi River. And that model will help us determine on the Myrtle Grove project what impacts we have on navigation.

So we'll be able to go to the navigation industries and say, if we do this diversion here, this is what we expect potentially could happen. And then as we do the other models, we'll come back and say, yeah, we're confirming that information. Here's the better information as we go.

So we are having steps through the process to get there and get information as it comes available.

MR. EDDIE ST. PIERRE:

About two years ago - I watch the history channel constantly - the Shaw of Dubai put some islands out in the middle of the ocean somewhere.

Is there any information that you

can get from these guys to help y'all with our problem?

They learned to divert the water and to build land instead of losing land. And they built islands. They built the whole United States, the continent, everything, out of sand and dredging it and used a ship that was about 75 people on it, sucking from the stern and pushing out the bow. I think that guy is unbelievable, but that's my thought.

Is there anything that you can maybe send somebody over there just to learn a little bit and come back and bring it home?

MR. NATHAN DAYAN:

Actually, our engineers have looked at some of that process, the ship that was used, the sand, the size grain that was looked at. And a lot of that information is being used. We're a different habitat here. We have a different geologic underneath us. What he built with the sand there and what

you can build with the sand here is not the same.

I'm a biologist, and it's just what I understand from my engineers. But we have looked at that. We've gone to other countries and looked at a lot of that. Our Corps of Engineers do that. They look at the most recent literature. So they are aware of that.

MR. BREN HAASE:

I would just add at it's most basic, we're talking about the dredge and fill project, which is what they did in Dubais. And we do that here all the time. Not that we can't learn knew techniques and new things, but certainly, what was done at Bayou Dupont, I don't know if you're familiar with that project, we dredged sand from the river and built wetlands across the levee and built wetlands. We do that routinely.

MR. EDDIE ST. PIERRE:

Maybe, it's something we can use to help us to shorten the span of time it

takes to study this thing so we can get it done.

MR. BREN HAASE:

Right. And that has to do with the state of technology. And, certainly, we don't want to miss anything that's somebody's doing on the other side of the globe that can help us expedite what we're doing here. I don't think that that's the case. Certainly, we take that into consideration.

MR. RODNEY DUFRENE:

Rodney Dufrene. I'm a commercial fisherman. I fished in most of the Barataria Estuaries. The Davis Pond Project, I see the impacts it has on Lake Salvadore.

How come y'all don't flow it more than y'all flow it?

MR. BREN HAASE:

Are you sure you're not Ted (inaudible)?

There are a number of reasons. I guess, initially, the reasons it hasn't flown at that capacity or what it

potentially could have flowed at was some engineering concerns, concerns of the levee. Some things that I believe some problems with the ponding area in terms of keeping too much water within the ponding area.

And then we have a Davis Pond Advisory Committee that recommends an operational plan for Davis Pond. And since the engineering concerns, I think, have been resolved or beginning to be resolved, the diversion is operated based on the recommendation of that advisory committee right now. So that's kind of a short answer and perhaps a bit of a vague answer.

I will tell you that one of the near-term studies that's part of this program is the modification of operations of Davis Pond. And we are looking at means to improve the wetland benefits, outputs that we're getting from that structure. And generally, that means targeting sediment, increasing flows, increasing the

footprint of the diversion to try to help with marsh health within the Barataria Basin.

MR. RODNEY DUFRENE:

My other thing is: All these structures they're building on the westbank of Jefferson Parish, we have a protection levee right here in South Lafourche. I'm seeing more and more being pushed up Bayou Pugot. On a storm event, we're going to end up flooding St. Charles and Lafourche Parish from the east side and also creating drainage problems.

Are y'all going to be addressing some of those issues?

MR. BREN HAASE:

Yeah. Certainly, we know, as wetlands are lost within the basin and the volume of water, the tidal prism, that's in the basin increases, that becomes more and more of an issue. It's easier for those tides to get into the upper basin.

So one way to address that,

obviously, is by restoring the wetlands that needs to prevent that extreme tidal fluctuation to happen. So certainly a rebuild of those wetlands and maintaining a sustainable, I keep using that term, but sustainable coast is a big part of addressing that issue.

MR. NATHAN DAYAN:

I'm not 100 percent sure that LCA Convey Atchafalaya Water to Western Terrebonne Parish, I think one of the subplans in that has some components to prevent saltwater from flowing up the bayou. I don't remember 100 percent off the top of my head. I haven't looked at that plan. That's one of our near-term plans that is being worked on right now.

We're awaiting funds from the federal government to build parts of it. You can look at LCA.gov. and you can look up the different plans and Convey Atchafalaya Water to Northern Terrebonne Parish, I believe, that's part of that plan. I'm trying to

remember off the top of my head.
Sorry.

MS. LEE MUELLER:

Any other questions?
Our team will definitely stick around after the presentation is finished to answer any questions you may have.
Now, we turn back to Nathan to the scoping process.

(FORMAL SCOPING SESSION)

MR. NATHAN DAYAN:

What we're going to do now is take official comments. And these can be in the form of questions. They can be statements about where we need to gather data. They can be -- here's some suggestions that make you think, actually.
What are the critical natural human environmental issues that need and should be addressed in this?
Navigation should be addressed.
Flooding should be addressed. Wetland loss should be addressed. Whatever you

feel needs to be in there.

What are the important resources that would benefit or be impacted if we do these actions? What are the reasonable alternatives? What can you think of that we haven't thought of, or maybe we have and don't need it. What can we do to help coastal restoration in Louisiana?

I'm going to throw a fourth one up. Is there a data source, information that we don't know of, that can make our model go faster, that can help us shorten this time scale. I know it's big one. Or do you know of a college professor here or a local high school teacher who's been sampling these areas for a long time and has information that can help us. We want that information. This is the time to give us those comments.

We're going to sit there and take them, record them and, again, report back to you on how we're going to discuss them and look at them in our

project.

MR. DWAYNE BOURGEOIS:

Dwayne Bourgeois. I'm the Director for with the North Lafourche Levee District. The point about data source. This may be something that's probably new. USGS is using second generation linear for the specific purpose to try to track levee systems and stuff like that, basically. It's the proof of concept. It's already been flown in Lafourche Parish and all over the levees in Lafourche Parish. Very high resolution linear ranging thing.

Maybe you don't know about it because it's, kind of, just proof of concept. I can give you any additional information on that. Thank you very much.

MR. NATHAN DAYAN:

I know I heard some comments out there when y'all were asking your questions. That includes some of those alternatives that you want to throw out there that you're looking at.

MR. DARRYL PAUL WARD:

Darryl Paul Ward. What are the critical natural human and environmental issues? Natural and human environmental issues should be - this should take in everybody. Like I had mentioned, plants, food. If something like that can affect all of us. And we all have to be brought into this to be a part of the human environmental issues.

What are the important resources in the natural and human? The important resources is the food and fuel that that part of the coastal is not - it's a whole new world out there that I think that everybody has to be a part of in the future.

Right now, it's only the coastal people that - it's going to be the new world of jobs and education is what I'm trying to say. Jobs and education. Everything out there is going to be new. You're talking about natural, natural resources, air, wind, water,

geothermal, waves, tides. All this is energy, energy, energy.

Some of this should be allowed to produce something to make us leaders. We have more natural resources in the State of Louisiana than any other country in the world. I think that we ought to put together a natural and human environment for us to participate together as a team to be a impact for our future.

The United States needs this. We need clean air, clean fuel, and new jobs, and new education. I believe this coastal is going to be the new jobs, new education, if a leader with a vision is allowed to participate in the forward advancement of all of us in Louisiana to realize that we have all the natural resources.

But we have to do something with it. We can sit up here and talk, make a canal, make a diversion, and go throw nutrients here and there. But you need a leader that's going to bring

everybody else in on it to benefit everybody in the United States of America and make Louisiana No. 1. And we can be No. 1. We have the natural resources. We have the power. We have the people. But you need somebody to organize it to put this together.

I understand Army Cops of Engineers is doing a lot. That's why a lot can be done when we have scientists and engineers. But you need somebody with common sense to work together with Army Corps of Engineers and the State.

And this is why I wrote to these people. This is why I'm here today. This is the natural and human environment of the benefits of our natural resources for our people to stand together with a leader. Thank you very much.

MR. NATHAN DAYAN:

Thank you for your comment. Anyone else?

MR. KERRY ST. PE':

My name is Kerry St. Pe'. I'm the

Director of the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program.

One of the objectives of this study is to assess all the resources of the river. And I'm glad to see that finally being done, know where all the sediment is on the bottom of the river, water column. And I would - that leads me to the dedicated dredging component of the study.

I firmly believe as one of the answers to the future of Louisiana is to use sediments in the river on the bottom, pump it out and to create marshes, ridges, barrier islands to restore those features.

But what's kept us from doing that on a large scale to this point is cost. I think the Master Plan has $71 million dedicated to marsh creation. But the acreage is, I think, underestimated in the Master Plan because of the cost attributed to building marshes.

And I believe that the cost of rebuilding these marshes with the

dredge pipe is based on the cost up to now. It's the way we price, and we cost out projects on a project by project basis. We need to be looking at this on a large-scale programmatic level. We need to look at using the dredge until this project runs out of money and keeping a dredge and pipe and infrastructure out there until we can find another source of money and continue using that same infrastructure, pipes, to create more marshes. That way you reduce the cost on a per cubic yard basis. That's how you reduce the cost.

I would hope that y'all would look at identifying areas where the sediment load on the bottom is greatest and pick those sites to build to cross over infrastructure to facilitate the use of dredges and pipes on those locations. When you use up all the sediment on that location, perhaps, you could come up with a way to deposit what you're dredging on a navigation basis in the

same hole in the same area where it can be used in the future to build marshes. I think that's all I have. Does that make sense?

MR. NATHAN DAYAN:

Yes, sir. Thank you. Do we have any other comments?

MR. RODNEY DUFRENE:

Rodney Dufrene. With this Davis Pond project, I'd like to see y'all divert more water to the wildlife management area on the east side of Lake Salvadore and catch all of it, not just a section of on through (inaudible).

MR. NATHAN DAYAN:

Thank you.

MS. LEE MUELLER:

Would there be a way for you to repeat that so she can hear? My apologies.

MR. RODNEY DUFRENE:

With the David Pond Project, I'd like to see y'all divert more water through the wildlife management area

east side of Lake SAlvadore. That way, it will catch the hole lake, instead of just a portion of the lake going straight across it. That is a big benefit I've seen with that project.

MR. NATHAN DAYAN:

Unless someone comes up with another comment, this is other ways to get in touch to give us comments. We have an email address dedicated to this project. Bill Klein is the Environmental Manager, who should have been here tonight. Unfortunately, he's been sick. You can call him or mail him. These are all ways you can send comment, or your friends can send comments, or people you hate can send comments. We want to hear from you.

Any other comments?

MR. EDDIE ST. PIERRE:

Eddie St. Pierre. I'd like to thank y'all for coming tonight informing us and helping us out. And I hope in the future we can help you out too. Thank you.

MR. NATHAN DAYAN:

Thank you.

MS. LEE MUELLER:

So we also have comment cards with us here this evening, which you can mail in if you prefer a written comment.

Again, as I said, this is not the only time we're gong to come out. We're going to continue engaging with you guys throughout the five-year study process. We understand it's a long time. So we will continue coming out to you guys.

LCA.gov is a great source of information. We have a project page that will continually update as we go on.

UNKNOWN PERSON:

Including tonight's presentation.

MR. LEE MUELLER:

Including tonight's presentation, correct. Here's just a screenshot of that project page. Also, you can submit a comment or a question via that

little box with an envelope. It will automatically generate an email to the project team, and it will be captured. If it's prior to May 4, it will be captured in the scoping report. If not, the team will also see it and consider it during the planning process.

With that said, here's also the contact information of all the people that presented this evening, if you have further questions for them.

Once again, thank you very much for joining us this evening. Your input is very important and we appreciate it.

(THE PROCEEDINGS ENDED AT 7:41 P.M.)

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