

RESTORE ACT Direct Component

Multiyear Implementation Plan Narrative

Plaquemines Parish



Date: February 24th, 2015

Eligible Applicant: Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana

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General Background and Introduction

In July 2012, the Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf States Act (RESTORE Act) established the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (Council) which is comprised of governors from the five affected Gulf States, the Secretaries from the U.S. Departments of the Interior, Commerce, Agriculture, and Homeland Security as well as the Secretary of the Army and the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The RESTORE Act created five separate components for funding from the established Trust Fund. The Direct Component is a Treasury administered component, which makes up 35% of the amounts deposited into the trust fund available to four Gulf States, 23 Florida Counties, and 20 Louisiana Parishes.

Louisiana, as determined by the RESTORE Act, will receive 7% of the 35% allocation. Of that allocation, 70% will go to the State and 30% will go to the named parishes. Plaquemines Parish is one of 20 coastal parishes in Louisiana that was named in the Direct Component of the RESTORE Act to receive funds. These funds were determined based on a weighted formula: 40% average miles of parish shoreline oiled (2010 – July 6, 2012); 40% by the population of the parish based on the 2012 census; and 20% by average land mass of the parish. Based on this formula Plaquemines Parish will receive 17.9998% of the relative 30% allocation.

Activities, projects, and programs that could be funded in Plaquemines Parish (hereafter the Parish) under the Direct Component could include: restoration and protection of the natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches and coastal wetlands of the Gulf Coast Region; mitigation of damage to fish, wildlife and natural resources; implementation of a federally approved marine, coastal, or comprehensive conservation management plan, including fisheries monitoring; workforce development and job creation; improvements to or on State parks located in coastal areas affected by the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill; infrastructure projects benefitting the economy or ecological resources, including port infrastructure; coastal flood protection and related infrastructure; planning assistance; promotion of tourism in the Gulf Coast Region, including recreational fishing; and promotion of the consumption of seafood harvested from the Gulf Coast Region.

Plaquemines Parish's Multiyear Implementation Plan (MIP) will be focused on ecosystem restoration. In order to fulfill this restoration objective several activities will be undertaken based on the availability of funding through RESTORE, but also based on the ability to leverage funding from other sources to enhance the magnitude of coastal restoration in coastal Louisiana. The Parish will work closely with the State of Louisiana to ensure that the goals of restoration are consistent with, or complementary to, the most recent version of the State's Coastal Master Plan. The Parish has a long standing history in understanding the intimate connection of a thriving Louisiana economy and sustainable environment. The Parish recognizes that there has to be a tangible connection between projects that sustain our coast, projects that protect our residents, and projects that enhance the economy of Plaquemines Parish and thus Louisiana. Though this initial allotment will not be enough to rebuild our wants and needs in our Parish, by partnering, shoulder to shoulder with the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority and building projects that are on, consistent



with, or similar to the Master Plan we hope to leverage state and federal dollars to stretch our conservation dollars for the betterment of the Parish and the State.



Multiyear Implementation Plan – Activity #1: Cat Island Restoration

Cat Island is recognized as critical bird habitat in Barataria Bay, Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana. Over the last 20 years, the islands have lost more than 90 percent of their land mass and were directly impacted and completely inundated by the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. This project is the culmination of several years' worth of work including significant partnership and leveraging of funds to ensure this project is constructed. Cat Island was a significant feature within Barataria Bay because they provide critical nesting habitat for a variety of birds including brown pelicans (*Pelecanus occidentalis*), reddish egrets (*Egretta rufescens*), and roseate spoonbills (*Platalea ajaja*). The reconstruction of the island would not only recreate essential bird nesting habitat for these species but will also, as designed, provide an opportunity for endangered American oystercatchers to nest.

Location

Cat Island is located in the Lower Barataria Bay (29°20'26.51"N; 89°52'12.02"W). The island chain consists of two island complexes – Cat Island West and Cat Island East. This project proposes the restoration of Cat Island East (Figure 1).

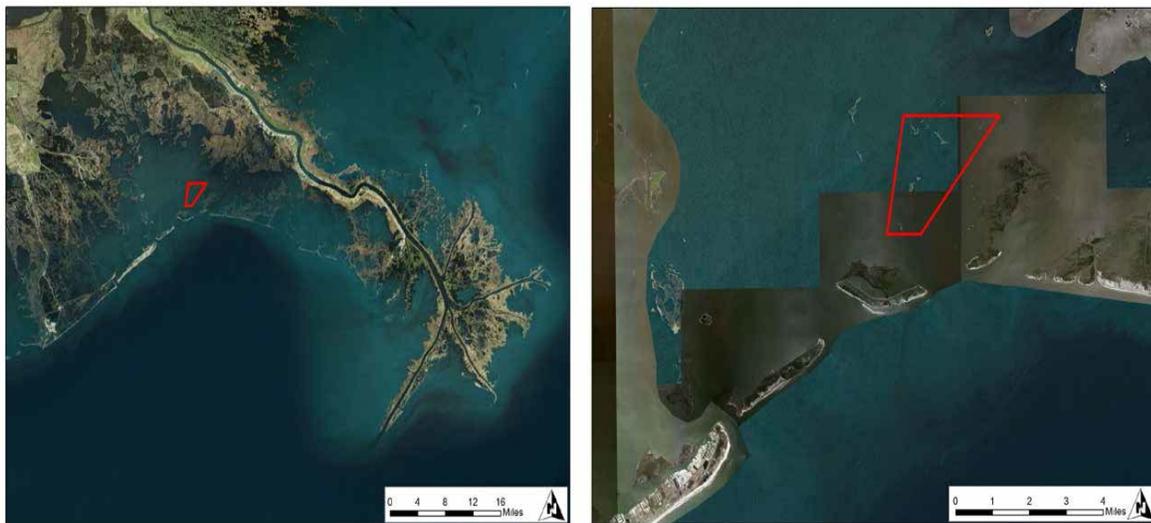


Figure 1. Aerial images showing the location of Cat Island in Lower Barataria Basin, Plaquemines Parish.



Need

Cat Island East (hereafter Cat Island) has eroded substantially over the last decade. Its current footprint, 1-3 acres, is less than 1% of the original size of the island (± 350 ac). Recent photographs of Cat Island show less than an acre of visible island at high tide (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Current footprint of Cat Island. Photographs taken Monday, March 9th, 2015.

Cat Island is an extremely important nesting / rookery location for coastal birds, especially the brown pelican. The first observations of colonial nesting birds on the subject islands occurred in 1997, when the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) documented nesting during post-hurricane surveys. These islands are extremely productive nesting grounds for brown pelicans, terns, gulls, and various wading bird species. In recent years, they annually support the hatching of thousands of birds. Brown pelicans, Louisiana’s state bird, nest in the black mangroves growing on the subject islands, feed along the Louisiana coast in shallow estuarine waters, and use sand spits and offshore sand bars as rest and roost areas. There are few islands that contain suitable nesting substrate for the brown pelican in coastal Louisiana. The habitat on the subject islands provides shelter, nesting, foraging sources, and stop-over or resting sites for a gamut of avian species, including egrets, herons, terns, gulls, wading birds, shorebirds, and migrating passerine birds. Besides providing significant habitat to a wide array of birds, the subject islands also provide habitat to “at risk/threatened and endangered” species, such as sea turtles, as well as other species. If restored and protected, it is expected that a suite of seabird and wading bird species will continue to utilize these habitats to nest.



Purpose

Reconstruct Cat Island using sustainable engineering and design principles to approximately 19 ac in size. This size is large enough to be sustainable through time, and provides significant bird nesting habitat.

Objectives

1. Complete planning and technical design on Cat Island
2. Create and maintain high-value habitat and nesting grounds for birds
3. Achieve island sustainability and stability for an extended life of 20 years

Eligibility of Activity

This activity meets the eligible activity of *restoration and protection of the natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches and coastal wetlands of the Gulf Coast region*. Specifically this activity targets:

- Restoration of wildlife habitat
- Restoration of coastal wetlands
- Protection of natural resources and ecosystems

Restoration of Cat Island

Why is restoration of Cat Island so important?

- Last remaining bird nesting islands of Lower Barataria Basin
- Restoration of critical bird habitat for brown pelicans (*Pelecanus occidentalis*), reddish egrets (*Egretta rufescens*), and roseate spoonbills (*Platalea ajaja*)
- Brown pelicans, Louisiana's state bird, nest in the black mangroves growing on the islands. Cat Island one of the few islands with suitable nesting substrate.
- Small isolated islands (<20ac) are key to survival of a number of bird species
- Too remote and small to support predator populations
- Documented impact from oiling
- Significant planning, geotechnical, and engineering and design is already complete for Cat Island East and West

Best Available Science

According to the Louisiana Master Plan (CPRA 2012), Louisiana is in the midst of a land loss crisis. 1880 square miles of land has been lost since the 1930's as a result of anthropogenic activities of oil and gas exploration and production, sea level rise, subsidence, and more frequent, more intense storm events. Loss of land not only jeopardizes communities and infrastructure through flooding but also removes critical breeding, nesting, and foraging habitat for wildlife and birds in coastal Louisiana. As explained earlier, the footprint of Cat Island has significantly diminished over the last 50 years. This is significant from a biological consequence perspective.



Birds see landscapes as heterogeneous units made up of a diversity of habitat types that can be used for fulfilling various ecological functions. Fragmentation of the habitat is one of the most important drivers of conservation (Saunders et al., 1991). The loss of islands in Baratavia Bay further fragments the landscape, and instead of a matrix of available island habitats for bird nesting/foraging, there is a homogenous landscape of open water. The restoration of Cat Island restores available nesting patches in a matrix of open water. Looking at historical trends of land loss as well as the environmental characteristics of the site, Cat Island restoration and reconstruction will be a challenging endeavor. However, using the best available science in island reconstruction, and knowledge about the types of habitat to be recreated on the landscape, Cat Island will be created to meet the two ecosystem objectives of this activity (objective #2 and 3 above). See the attached preliminary engineering report of Cat Island for due diligence in best available science on island construction. Furthermore see the attached references associated with potential habitat for important bird species like oystercatchers. The construction of Cat Island is a unique construction challenge for the following reasons:

- Remote location
- High energy wave environment
- No good proximal borrow sites
- Small footprint to build onto
- Upper limit of practicable construction techniques
- Shallow draft – can't use deeper draft equipment for construction
- Current acreage less than 3 acres (originally closer to 350 acres)
- Substrate mostly silty clays - < 10% coarse-grained materials

Geomorphology and Preliminary Geotechnical

These small bird islands are the remnants of the back barrier marsh platforms of the Grand Terre and Chenier Ronquille headlands. Although formerly part of the barrier island chain, the subject islands consisted mostly of silty clays, with less than 10 percent coarse-grained material (sand, shell, and rock), with a predominance of coarse-grained material on the surface and higher clays and organics in the subsurface. This coarse layer naturally protects the surface of the island creating productive habitat for target species. The underlying organic soils promote aboveground production of saltmarsh cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*) and black mangroves (*Avidennia germinans*) which are essential habitat for target species.

Measures of Success and Milestones

Two measures of success will be tied to our objectives:

- Creating and maintaining high-value habitat and nesting grounds for birds
- Achieving island sustainability and stability for an extended life of 20 years

Sustainability is a key measure of success as three key issues have resulted in the deterioration of the present Cat Island:



- Shoreline destabilization through waves and wind
- Natural subsidence and sea level rise
- Land mass loss due to storms

In order to measure the success of this project the following milestones will be put in place:

1. Complete pre-construction activities (i.e., engineering and design, project planning, and any additional geotechnical and environmental compliance)
2. Complete construction of containment of Cat Island
3. Complete construction of fill of Cat Island
4. Complete construction of living shoreline and revegetation of Cat Island

Prioritization of Activity

Public Outreach and Engagement with Cat Island

Cat Island has been a restoration priority for Plaquemines Parish for the last three years. The Parish has engaged with a number of partners to establish the restoration partnership which highlights the level of engagement of non-governmental organizations as well as businesses to the importance of restoring these islands. There have been several presentations within the Parish, as well as at the state level, showcasing the change and loss of habitat of Cat Island. These presentations have documented the need for restoration of this valuable habitat. This has been further supported by funding, when available, being used for initial site geotechnical engineering by Manchac Consulting Group, Inc., and the preliminary engineering and design, and best value analyses by Arcadis. These funds will be leveraged with the priority nature of the restoration for the construction of Cat Island.

Loss of Critical Habitat

The priority of Cat Island is the documented loss of land acreage of these vital habitats. Since 1935 the islands have lost significant acreage. Cat Island on average has 13-19ft of shoreline retreat per year (depending on island side), and since 1998 has maintained, on average, a 6% island area loss rate (Figure 3).

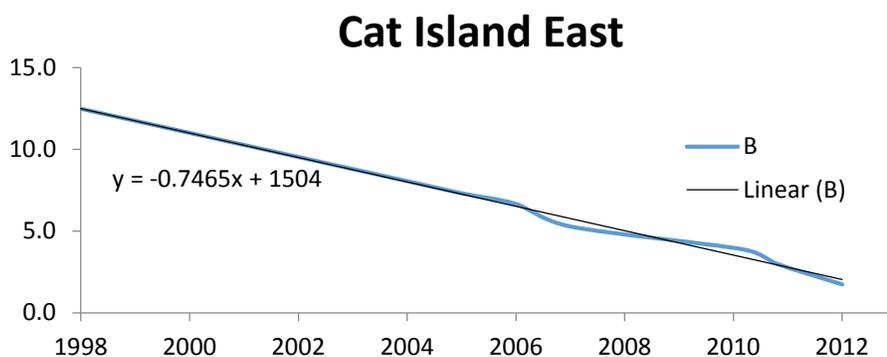


Figure 3. Island area loss between 1998 to 2012 for Cat Island.



Without investment in reconstruction and restoration Cat Island will cease to exist.

Birds

The restoration of Cat Island for bird habitat is a critical feature of the Lower Barataria Bay complex. Islands that have mixed sand/shell or other large particle substrate and have prominent raised features of marsh and island that are close to foraging habitat, and those islands that are free and isolated from predators, are priority islands for bird habitat and bird conservation. Specifically the threatened oystercatcher. The National Audubon Society hypothesizes that there are currently about 10 nesting pairs of oystercatchers in Barataria Bay and these birds will utilize these islands as nesting islands as they are in close proximity to exposed oyster reefs and breaks, as well as flats and shorelines to forage (Toland, 1999; Nol and Humphrey, 2012). Additional exposure in these raised islands during egg incubation (providing a 360° degree view) for predator vigilance is an added advantage (TPA, 2008).

Risks and Uncertainties of the Activity

Risks and uncertainties associated with construction are all intimately tied with the cost of construction. Unforeseen circumstances could potentially delay construction, increase the price of construction, or result in failure of the construction.

Best Value Analysis

A best value analysis has been completed to determine the best option to meeting the proposed objectives (i.e., high value habitat and nesting ground, sustainable island footprint). The best value analysis also included a leveraging component that looked at ways to enhance funding opportunities through minimized project costs. The best value analysis looked at: environmental characteristics of wind and wave energy; geotechnical constraints; variability associated with fill materials (i.e., source identification, suitability, and feasibility); design features including containment, cap and shoreline protection; constructability; sustainability; and cost.

Cat Island has some unique project conditions. This includes being in a remote location (water access only), the construction of the island is for bird habitat as a priority; there are no sandy sediments in the near vicinity for borrow/fill material; water depth is on the upper limit of practical construction techniques (4-5ft) and limits the draft of construction vessels and equipment; and the current available land mass of the island itself is very small. There are other unique properties to the island reconstruction that are atypical from barrier island restoration or marsh restoration.

Key differences from barrier island restoration:

- Longshore transport not a significant process.
- Waves are not unidirectional, but rather approach the island from any angle. Waves are typically smaller than those on barrier islands, but yet still have a significant impact on marsh.
- Specifically with Cat Island, a lack of existing ground to augment to.



Key difference from marsh restoration:

- Cat Island has environmental conditions that are more energetic than marsh areas.
- Often need to be created to a higher elevation.
- Again, lack of existing ground to augment to.
- Shoreline protection will need to be more spatially extensive, and larger for protection and sustainability.
- Design of the habitat from an elevation and type standpoint is more critical.

One needs to consider all available options in island / marsh construction. These can split into four categories: 1) containment, 2) dredge and fill material, 3) cap material (for bird island creation a coarse-grained material), and 4) shoreline protection.

There are several options for containment. For island longevity and sustainability, it is highly recommended that the surrounding shoreline be protected with larger aggregate, shell, or rock to increase the longevity and sustainability of the subject islands. For the purposes of this study, Class 1 riprap (D50 = 65#) was used for shoreline protection at a 5:1 slope (approximately 2 CY/LF). The cost for shoreline protection in this scenario is approximately \$176/LF in place. It is not recommended that rock be used if the exterior of the island is constructed only of sand because the sand may migrate in and around the rock, becoming lost in wave and tidal action. Living shoreline options were also evaluated for shoreline protection, but oyster attenuation and production will be limited in this area due to predation and, therefore, not feasible due to cost. See attached preliminary design report.

Dredge and fill material can be adjacent borrow material (sandy/ silty clay with environmental clearance), river sediment, sediment from the Barataria walkway, or from offshore sites. The placement of a cap of coarse-grained material will increase the sustainability of the site. The cap could be a local sandy clay mix with a topping of aggregate or shell for shore bird nesting. Shoreline protection increases the islands sustainability, enhances opportunity for long-term maintenance with several design options available including rip/rap –rock, rock filled geomats, and some living shoreline technologies.

Construction Designs

Please see attached preliminary design report (Appendix Attached) and engineering designs for Cat Island (Figure 4). Some characteristics of the island design:

- 3,470 LF around perimeter of island
- Fill volume calculated based on 20% settlement and 2' of fill self-weight consolidation
- Open 700' of beach
- Cap – 2' sand/clay cap mix

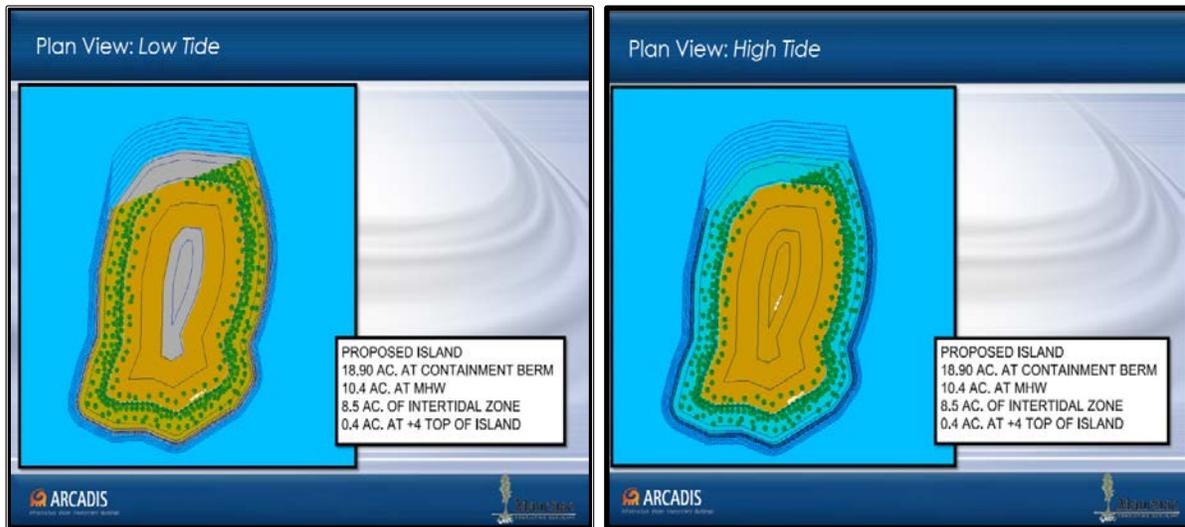


Figure 4. Proposed construction design of Cat Island East under both low-tide and high-tide conditions.

Permitting and Environmental Compliance is in place (See Attached Permit). Permit issued by Department of Natural Resources – Office of Coastal Management (Coastal Use Permit – CUP) – signed 10/12/2012 – good for 5 years post signature.

Based on significant analysis of best value options for construction of Cat Island, and given the funding circumstances associated with RESTORE Direct Component and available sources of leveraging, Option 1 will be selected. This option was significantly vetted through vetting of past projects (See Preliminary Design Report), researching past studies, and engaging both technical experts of agencies, and industry experts of ecological engineering companies. Option 1 was designed using the following features:

- Local borrow containment
- Local borrow / river sand fill
- Rock shoreline protection

Public Input to MIP Activity

After over 60 days of public opportunity for review, including press releases, public notices, social media pushes including Facebook and Twitter, as well as placing hard copies of the MIP in both public libraries in the Parish, no comments were received on the MIP nor on the type of activity proposed for funding. Please see *Public Engagement: Public Input, Review, and Comment* section below to see public engagement details.

Budget and Leveraging of Funding:

Please use the associated preliminary design report to look at comparison of construction costs between different construction options, as well as the details associated with each bid item.



Please also review the preliminary design document to understand cost considerations associated with self-weight consolidation, quantities, and target fill levels for construction.

Budget

1. Option 1 (Best Value Analysis)- Local Borrow / Rip-Rap Shoreline
 - a. Local Borrow for Containment
 - i. \$12 / Unit @ 50,000 units = \$600,000
 - b. River Sand Fill
 - i. \$18 / Unit @ 100,000 units = \$1,800,000
 - c. Local Borrow Fill
 - i. \$8 / Unit @ 100,000 units = \$800,000
 - d. Rip-rap Shoreline Protection
 - i. \$176 / LF @ 2,800 LF = \$500,000
 - e. Landscape
 - i. \$80,000 for revegetation and oyster shell deployment
 - f. Mobilization / Demobilization
 - i. \$500,000 for setup and tear down of construction equipment

Construction will be bid out via a public RFP public notice. The contractor that will be selected will have to fulfill all of the federal regulatory requirements. Parish administration and Crossties will manage and provide program oversight to the construction of Cat Island (see project oversight and management, and indirect costs).

- Who: Director of Coastal Zone Management; Administrative Assistant to the Director of Coastal Zone Management; Chief Scientist; Project Manager; Selected Contractor

2. Contingency
 - a. 10% Contingency on \$4,280,000
 - i. \$428,000

A self-imposed construction contingency of 10% will be allocated to the Cat Island construction project. Access to the contingency will have to be driven by substantiated reasons from the contractor and approved through Parish administration, with overall approval designated to the Parish President.

3. Project Oversight and Management
 - a. \$160,000

- Who: Director of Coastal Zone Management; Administrative Assistant to the Director of Coastal Zone Management Chief Scientist; Project Manager; Managing Principal
- Tasks:



- Pre-construction activities of compliance with federal regulations, RFQ /RFP development for construction, construction management if necessary, procurement; support for Plaquemines Parish Government (PPG)
 - Oversee maintenance of schedule and milestones; identify challenges and difficulties that result in project implementation delay
 - Report on milestones, reporting to Treasury Department as necessary
4. Travel
- a. \$49,110
 - Who: Director of Coastal Zone Management; Administrative Assistant to the Director of Coastal Zone Management Chief Scientist; Project Manager; Managing Principal
 - Tasks:
 - Project management and coordination
 - Visual inspections of construction work
 - Adaptive management as needed
 - Boat rental and mileage required to get out to the site in Lower Barataria Bay
5. Supplies:
- a. \$2,500
 - Who: Plaquemines Parish Government
6. Indirect Costs
- a. 3% of \$4,868,000
 - b. \$147,588

Indirect costs will be recovered from this project to support PPG in administering the project, and maintaining compliance with federal and Treasury regulations.

7. Project Total: \$5,067,198

Leveraging

Restoration Partnership

There has been a coordinated effort between several partners to restore Cat Island. The restoration partnership is contributing to the restoration of Cat Island. The partnership includes: Plaquemines Parish Government, Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program, Shell, Apache Minerals, Coastal Impact Assistance Program, American Bird Conservancy, and National Audubon Society.

1. Intergovernmental Agreement between CPRA and Plaquemines Parish Government- State Project BA-0162-CAT (executed 14th November 2014):
 - a. \$1,200,000 - for engineering and design, and construction of Cat Island
2. American Bird Conservancy (ABC):
 - a. \$210,000 – for rip-rap / living shoreline to protect and sustain the island that is reconstructed.



3. Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary Foundation:
 - a. \$900,000 – committed towards the restoration of Cat Island

Total contribution of the restoration partnership is \$2,310,000.

Match of RESTORE through Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority

The Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority in discussing Direct component funding to the individual parishes has agreed to match Direct Component projects that are consistent with and similar to projects on the Louisiana Master Plan up to 30% of the total funds put forward to the project. This match could be \$378,000. Plaquemines Parish at the time of MIP submission to the Treasury Department has an electronic request in to CPRA.

US Army Corps of Engineers Dredge Fill Demo

The LCA demonstration program (DEMO) purpose is to resolve critical areas of scientific, technical, or engineering uncertainty while providing meaningful restoration benefits whenever possible. The proposed project at Cat Island will demonstrate we can efficiently transport dredged material long distances. Typical dredged material placement is within 3-5 miles. This project will demonstrate we can take material from the Mississippi river and place at Cat Island; a distance of over 20 miles while providing meaningful habitat benefits for migratory birds. Cost share in the feasibility analysis to develop the details of the project sufficient to recommend construction. The total estimated cost of the project is \$700,000. Plaquemines parish obligation is 50% or \$350,000.

Total Budget Justification

<i>Budget Categories</i>	<i>Activity Cost</i>	<i>Source of Funds</i>			<i>Potential not Confirmed</i>
		<i>RESTORE</i>	<i>USACE</i>	<i>Partnership</i>	<i>CPRA</i>
<i>Construction of Cat Island</i>	<i>\$4,331,510</i>	<i>\$1,260,000</i> <i>(\$350k is non-federal match to USACE)</i>	<i>\$700,000</i>	<i>\$2,310,000</i>	<i>\$378,000</i>
<i>Contingency of Construction</i>	<i>\$428,000</i>	<i>\$428,000</i>			
<i>Program Management</i>	<i>\$160,000</i>	<i>\$160,000</i>			
<i>Overhead (Indirect @ 3%)</i>	<i>\$147,588</i>	<i>\$147,588</i>			
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>\$5,067,198</i>	<i>\$2,057,198</i>	<i>\$700,000</i>	<i>\$2,310,000</i>	



References

LA CPRA (2012). Louisiana's Comprehensive Master Plan for a Sustainable Coast: committed to our coast. Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, The State of Louisiana, pp.189

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Toland, B. 1999. Nest site characteristics, breeding, phenology, and nesting success of American oystercatchers in Indian River County, Florida. *Florida Field Naturalist* 27(3): 112-116

Tampa Port Authority (TPA), 2008. Sovereign lands management initiatives program. American Oystercatcher nesting in Hillsborough Bay, Florida: Population trends 1990-2007 and management recommendations. Prepared by Florida Coastal Islands Sanctuaries Program, Tampa FL. pp.40



Public Engagement Strategy: Public Input, Review and Comment

Plaquemines parish completed its draft Multiyear Implementation Plan on December 4th of 2014, and posted it online December 9th, 2014 for the mandatory 45 day public comment / review period. The following were steps that the Parish took to obtain broad based participation in reviewing and commenting on the MIP:

- Public Comment period was originally from December 8th, 2014, to January 25th, 2015
- Several public engagement forums were utilized to engage public comment and review:

1. Initial Press Release Article:

On April 20, 2010 the Deepwater Horizon oil spill occurred in the Gulf of Mexico releasing a significant amount of oil and affecting wildlife, fisheries, and livelihoods across the Gulf and especially in Plaquemines Parish. In July 2012, the Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf States Act (RESTORE Act) established the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council which is comprised of governors from the five affected Gulf States, the Secretaries from the U.S. Departments of the Interior, Commerce, Agriculture, and Homeland Security as well as the Secretary of the Army and the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The RESTORE Act created five separate components for funding from the established Trust Fund. The Direct Component is a Treasury administered component, which makes up 35% of the amounts deposited into the Trust Fund available to four Gulf States, 23 Florida Counties, and 20 Louisiana Parishes. In 2014, almost 4 years after the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, and two years after the historic RESTORE Act was passed, the US Treasury Department has released its regulations about how the funds being deposited into the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Trust Fund can be spent. What this means for Plaquemines Parish is that we can now go to work repairing the injury that we received from the Deepwater Horizon disaster. We can now go to work in protecting our residents and furthering our economy.

Louisiana, as determined by the RESTORE Act, will receive 7% of the 35% allocation. Of that allocation, 70% will go to the State and 30% will go to the named parishes. Plaquemines Parish is one of 20 coastal parishes in Louisiana that was named in the Direct Component of the RESTORE Act to receive funds. These funds were determined based on a weighted formula: 40% average miles of parish shoreline oiled (2010 – July 6, 2012); 40% by the population of the parish based on the 2012 census; and 20% by average land mass of the parish. Based on this formula, Plaquemines Parish will receive 17.9998% of the relative 30% allocation.

In order to access RESTORE Direct Component funds from the US Treasury Department, as stipulated in the regulations, Plaquemines Parish is required to develop a Multiyear Implementation Plan (MIP) that describes the activities that would be funded using the funds available. Plaquemines Parish is the first eligible entity across the Gulf to produce a MIP for public comment and consideration for funding from the RESTORE Direct Component. Within this MIP, Plaquemines Parish has leveraged significant private and state dollars to propose one eligible activity – the restoration and reconstruction of Cat Island East. Cat Island East is an extremely important habitat for nesting birds in the Lower Barataria Basin and has lost significant acreage through time as a result of storms, as well as having been significantly oiled as a result of Deepwater Horizon. The restoration of Cat Island East is in line with objectives of the State of Louisiana's Master Plan, and absolutely is the right character activity as the very first step, Gulf-wide, to ecosystem restoration coming out of RESTORE.

Please find a link to the MIP at the bottom of this article, including all associated supplemental material. The MIP will be available for comment for the next 45 days. The MIP will also be available for review in the Belle Chasse, and Port Sulphur Libraries. Following the 45 days, all comments received will be addressed and incorporated as appropriate. Please address comments in writing to PJ Hahn, Director of Coastal Zone Management, 8056 Hwy 23, Suite 307, Belle Chasse, LA, 70037, or by email at pjhahn@plaqueminesparish.com.



Though we recognize that current allotments through the Direct Component will be enough to rebuild our wants and needs in our Parish, by partnering shoulder to shoulder with the State of Louisiana's Coastal Protection and Regulatory Authority and building projects that are in, consistent with, or similar to the Master Plan, and engaging our vested stakeholders and non-governmental organizations, we hope to leverage state, federal, and private dollars to stretch our conservation dollars for the betterment of the Parish and the State.

This news article was posted on the web. The updated the web link is below.

2. Public Notice in the Plaquemines Gazette. Here is the Plaquemines Gazette article:

<http://plaqueminesgazette.com/community/plaquemines-parish-releases-multiyear-implementation-plan-restore-funding>

3. In lieu of change of administration and change in potential parish individuals receiving public comments, the Parish extended public comment by 2 weeks

<http://plaqueminesparish.com/news1.php?newsID=250>

This article was released on January 22nd as a follow-up notice to the Parish residents that went out December 9th that the public comment period was extended by 2 weeks.

4. Social Media campaign

Several Tweets went out through the official Plaquemines Parish twitter account (@Plaquemines_Gov) (Figure 5). The twitter account has over 790 followers. The following tweets went out:

December 8th, 2014: Public comment now open on Plaquemines RESTORE Multiyear Implementation Plan <http://plaqueminesparish.com/news1.php?newsID=250> ...

January 16th, 2015: Plaquemines Parish is accepting public comment on Multiyear Implementation Plan for RESTORE Funds. Send comment... <http://fb.me/756qrVhkh>

January 22nd, 2015: Public comment period extended on Plaquemines RESTORE Multiyear Implementation Plan <http://www.plaqueminesparish.com/news1.php?newsID=250> ...

January 26th, 2015: Plaquemines Parish releases Multiyear Implementation Plan for RESTORE Funding... <http://fb.me/1LFX1Tpa9>

February 5th, 2015: Tomorrow is the last day for public comment related to the Multiyear Implementation Plan for Plaquemines Parish.... <http://fb.me/3J0GxpOIs>

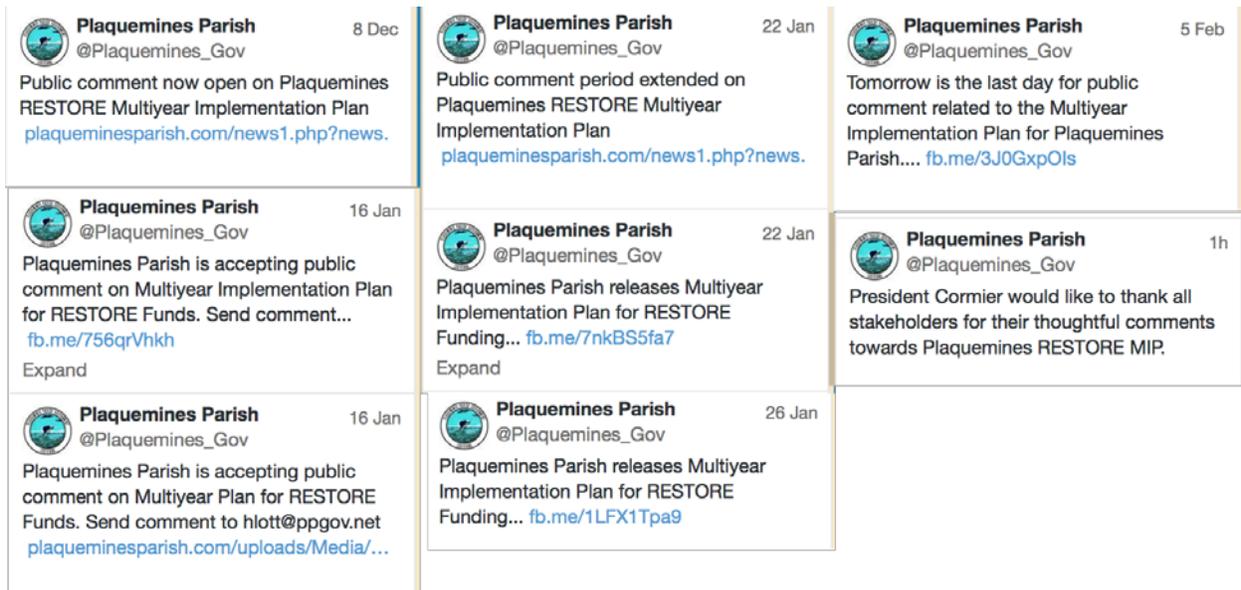


Figure 5. Tweets associated with public comment period of Plaquemes Parish MIP

The news release of the MIP was also placed on facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/plaquemesgovernment/posts/882536221798835>

5. MIP was placed in hardcopy form in both in the Belle Chasse and Port Sulphur Libraries.

The MIP hardcopies were placed in the libraries early January after the new administration had been appointed. This late distribution of the hardcopy versions of the MIP also resulted in Plaquemes Parish extending the public comment timeline.

Alterations to the Publicly Released MIP

The overall activity description of the MIP has not been altered. However, there have been several additions and amendments made to the MIP that we wanted to make sure were captured:

1. The Parish over the December 2014 time-frame went through elections for a new administration. The new president of the Parish is Mr. Amos Cormier Jr. This is reflected on the cover page of the MIP narrative.
2. Added a section titled “Public Input to MIP Activity”
3. Under Budget and Leveraging of Funding:
 - a. The Conservation Restoration Partnership through CPRA has been removed. The Parish had applied for \$1 million dollars match to the Cat Island project and received notice that it was not successful in its application.
 - b. Additional CIAP funds are available through the USACE
 - c. Restoration partnership funds have been further refined and identified
 - d. Budget has been expanded to reflect confirmation of leveraging