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LCA Report Delayed Until November

ROR Urges Corps to Include Third Delta Conveyance Channel in Comprehensive Plan

The October 10 release of a much-anticipated draft plan to halt Louisiana's rapid rate of coastal land loss has been delayed until November, but Restore or Retreat (ROR) is not waiting until the public comment period to push for the inclusion of a key restoration project.

The Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA) Study prepared by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) aims to offer specific project alternatives, with total prices ranging from \$6 billion to \$14 billion, based on the restoration needs and concepts identified by the state's COAST 2050 report. Once released for public comment, and after any subsequent modifications are made, state officials will use the plan as a blueprint to request authorization from Congress next year in

an expected Water Resources and Development Act (WRDA) bill.

But before the LCA Study reaches Washington, DC, ROR supporters are urging COE officials to make the Third Delta Conveyance Channel, the most significant delta-building restoration option for the Barataria-Terrebonne basins, a high-priority project in the study's project alternatives.

"The Third Delta Conveyance Channel is the most promising large-scale restoration project designed to protect communities and critical infrastructure," explains ROR Executive Director Lori LeBlanc. "It must be a part of the LCA Study if we are serious about the long-term sustainability of the Barataria-Terrebonne basins."

Following a round of LCA public hearings in August, LeBlanc issued an official statement on behalf of ROR that calls for the inclusion of the Third Delta in the final plan. Since then, she has also met numerous times with COE, La. Department of Natural Resources of Governor's Office officials to extol the importance of the project to our coastal region.

Continued on page 3

Annual Fundraiser Is a Barn-Storming Success

On September 18, about 375 guests attended ROR's second-annual "Barn-Storming Party to Save Our Coast" at the Bollinger Barn in Lockport, raising nearly \$50,000 for our coastal advocacy initiatives. Thank you for your support!



See page 4 for a complete list of sponsors.



From the Executive Director.... ROR's Lori LeBlanc

As I enter into my third year as ROR's Executive Director, I can't help but think how far we have come and yet how much more we must do to solve the fundamental problem of coastal land loss for our region. The LCA Study continues to progress and we have kept a close eye on its development.

Through it all, we have stuck to our mission of aggressively seeking, identifying and implementing large scale coastal restoration projects for the Barataria and Terrebonne basins. I commend the efforts of the various agencies involved, especially DNR, the Corps of Engineers and the Governor's Office who have spent endless hours on the LCA study and are continuously working with ROR. Our concerns for the LCA study process are put forth, not to delay the study in any way, but in order to make it a stronger and more effective document.

We believe that the large-scale projects should be included in the LCA Study's final plan and they should be the foundation of Louisiana's comprehensive restoration program. By not including the large-scale projects with the necessary implementation detail, the LCA will not represent a comprehensive coastal restoration plan and it will not restore, preserve or maintain a sustainable system that is critical to Louisiana's environment, economy and culture.

As the LCA Study's final plan is released for public comment later this fall, I urge you to read the plan, attend local public hearings if possible, and let your voice be heard on this very important issue.

**Share the Coastal Restoration
Message This Holiday Season...**
**"Bayou Farewell" makes a great Christmas gift!
Call ROR at (985) 448-4485 to order your copy
today. The proceeds from all books purchased
through ROR stay with the organization to help
support our coastal initiatives.**



CH2MHill's Steve Mathies, ROR's Lori LeBlanc and DNR's Mitch Andrus discussed the Third Delta Conveyance Channel at an August 26 Houma-Terrebonne Chamber of Commerce luncheon.



ROR participated in "Live after 5" in downtown Houma on August 22. The event featured local blues musician Tab Benoit, who launched a coastal restoration foundation called "Voice of the Wetlands."

Passage of Amendments Spell HOPE for Louisiana's Coast

Not only did Louisiana voters approve three constitutional amendments extremely important to future efforts for saving our dwindling coastline on October 5, they also sent a powerful message to Washington: "We are willing to invest in our coast. Now it is your turn."

The election-day victory for amendments #1 and #2 establish a secure funding stream from future non-recurring revenue and a potential tobacco settlement sale that could provide the state's share in what is estimated to be more than \$14 billion in necessary coastal restoration projects. Amendment #3 limits the state liability for property damaged by restoration efforts to fair-market value, the standard used by the federal government.

"Going into the election, we said that Congress would not see the urgent need for funding a coastal restoration plan if Louisiana itself did not make it a priority. Voters listened and they agreed, resoundingly passing these amendments that clearly show our commitment to funding projects to preserve the land that we haven't yet lost," explains Sen. Reggie Dupre, who sponsored the amendment proposals in the state Senate during the 2003 regular legislative session.

Rep. Loulan Pitre, who steered the proposals through the state House, agrees, saying that now the state's efforts will need to focus on Washington and communicating the urgent need for restoration based on south Louisiana's economic and environmental significance to the entire nation.

"Considering the current level of military funding needs and a national budget deficit, now may not be the easiest time for any state to be requesting billions of dollars in project funds. But we must convince the White House and Congress that our coastline is home to millions of people, critical energy infrastructure and an ecosystem unmatched in value. To lose this would truly be a national crisis," Pitre said. "Comprehensive coastal restoration is now a state priority. It must be a national one as well."

From the President...
Alex Plaisance, Jr.

If ROR's recent fundraiser is any indication of the groundswell of support building towards coastal issues, we have exceeded our expectations. In only its second year, ROR's Barn-Storming Party to Save our Coast was more successful than we ever imagined it could be. We greatly appreciate all of our sponsors and all those who attended. ROR continues to be a key player in the state's coastal restoration efforts and our success will always depend on your continued support. I urge you to share ROR's information with others whom you think would be interested in joining our fight. ROR is always available to meet with current members and prospective members to share our vision.

Did You Know?

Wetland Loss Is Concern to Louisianians

In a statewide poll conducted in September, 84 percent of Louisiana voters said they were aware of the state's coastal land loss, and 57 percent identified coastal wetlands loss as more urgent than hurricane protection and oil and gas exploration. Those polled, however, were split about who should pay for restoration efforts, with 51 percent saying the entire country should foot the bill, and 33 percent saying it's the state's responsibility.



New Look, New Logo

In this issue of "The Conveyance," Restore or Retreat debuts our new logo, prominently featuring the ROR name. You will also

begin seeing the new logo design on all of our correspondence, promotional materials and, of course, our web site. Visit www.restoreorretreat.org for facts about Louisiana coastal land loss and the Third Delta Conveyance Channel, and to view past issues of our newsletter.

www.restoreorretreat.org

LCA STUDY

-continued from page 1-

ROR Official Statement on LCA Study

August 2003

(excerpt)

The members of ROR believe that coastal erosion is an aggressive but yet insidious cancer that is eating away at the heart of our state and the heart of our nation. The only way to combat the aggressive nature of this coastal crisis is to implement aggressive measures. The highest rates of land loss are right here in our very own backyards and in just the past 75 years we have lost our most valuable land-building resource, the Mississippi River. We want and so desperately need the river back into our system. If we can engineer the river with a massive levee system, a task that was undertaken in 1930, then we can engineer the river to renourish our basin, while also protecting us from flooding...

ROR supports a large-scale restoration project, known as the Third Delta Conveyance Channel, which would reintroduce the freshwater from the river and its important land-building sediment to the Barataria-Terrebonne basin...

"It (Third Delta project) must be a part of the LCA Study if we are serious about the long-term sustainability of the Barataria-Terrebonne basins."

- ROR's Lori LeBlanc

As we proceed toward Congressional authorization of the study and, ultimately, funding for the actual \$14 billion coastal restoration plan, members of ROR insist that the final proposal includes aggressive large-scale projects like the Third Delta Conveyance Channel. Projects like this offer the best opportunity, not just for retarding land loss, but for actually building land, particularly for the area of Barataria-Terrebonne that experiences the greatest coastal land loss rate in the state...

We need large-scale restoration projects that are going to get the job done. We need large-scale restoration projects that will allow us to continue to live, work and play in a healthy estuary. And, if we do not have the courage to put forth a plan that includes aggressive large-scale measures and settle for projects that will only reduce or maintain land loss, than we are wasting our time...

The Third Delta Conveyance Channel is the most promising large-scale restoration project, offering multiple-use benefits that could protect the Barataria and Terrebonne basins on each side of the Lafourche Ridge. The state has committed \$1 million for a feasibility study on the Third Delta project, and work has already begun. The members of Restore or Retreat insist that the Third Delta be a part of the final LCA proposal presented for Congressional authorization if we are serious about implementing Coast 2050 and if we are serious about the long-term sustainability of this region.

Mark Your Calendar

Back to the Bayou
Paddle Trip
Nov. 7-10
www.btneq.org

Clean Gulf Conference
New Orleans
Nov. 19-20
www.cleangulf.org



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Mission Statement

Realizing that the Barataria and Terrebonne basins are the two most rapidly eroding estuaries on the earth, and understanding that an economic and ecological travesty is occurring, the concerned members of Restore or Retreat seek to identify, expedite and aggressively engage in solutions to urgently achieve comprehensive coastal restoration.

BECOME A MEMBER/VOLUNTEER

Contributions to this organization are **tax deductible**. Restore or Retreat is a 501(c)(3) organization. Tax identification number is 72-1474850. Please make checks payable to Restore or Retreat, Inc.

Levels of Support:

Platinum	\$10,000 or greater	Bronze	\$1,000 to \$2,499
Gold	\$5,000 to \$9,999	Associate	\$100 to \$999
Silver	\$2,500 to \$4,999	Friend	\$10 to \$99

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I would like to be an active volunteer, please contact me.

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