

COASTAL ZONE

Newsletter

May 2025

West Shore Lake Pontchartrain Levee Update

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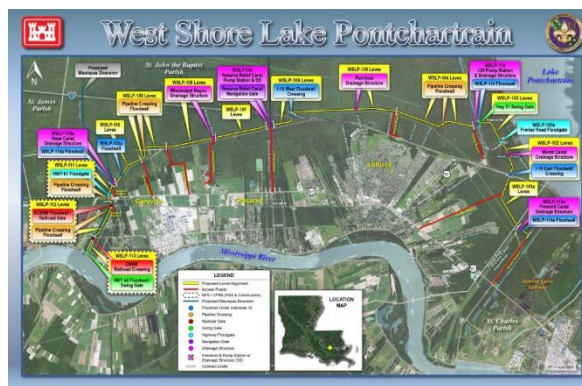
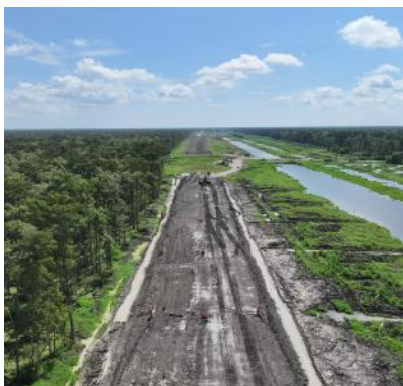


St. John Coastal Updates (6)

As of February 2025, the West Shore Lake Pontchartrain Levee (WSLP) reaches 101a, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 114a are under construction. WSLP-110 is on schedule and 98% complete. WSLP-107 is on schedule and 69% complete. All other reaches under construction are less than 60% complete. WSLP reaches 103a, 110a, 111, 112, 113, and 114 are in the pre-construction phase (WSLP-111 – WSLP-113 will be constructed by the LA Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) in conjunction with the River Reintroduction into Maurepas Swamp Project.

One of the next milestones is the Tentatively Selected Plan (TSP), which is anticipated in November 2025. A Draft Report for Public Review is projected for March 2026.

Installation of the east Temporary Retaining Structure (TRS) underneath I-10 near LaPlace at WSLP-106 is nearly complete. The TRS will allow for water removal from the area and construction of the I-10 floodwall crossing. Additionally, the installation of the fourth wing wall is complete in preparation for the interior drainage canal. Reach 106 is approximately 52% complete. As of early March 2025, burning, grubbing, clearing, and sand hauling for the alignment has begun at WSLP-109, north of Garyville. Reach 109 includes the pipeline crossing floodwall.

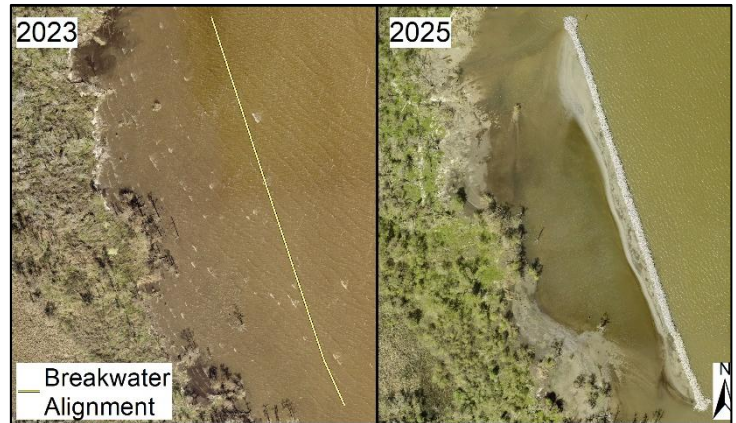


Regular updates on the WSLP Levee can be found on the [Army Corps' WSLP Website](#) or [Facebook Page](#).

Frenier Breakwater Project Nearing Completion

St. John the Baptist's Lake Pontchartrain Shoreline Protection Project at Frenier is located on a shoreline that has eroded approximately 10 feet per year since 1915. Funded by a GOMESA bond, the breakwater will reduce erosion, stabilize the shoreline, build back additional land through the accretion of sediment, and increase protection from storm surge events and coastal flooding along Lake Pontchartrain. Construction began on the project in early October. In February, St. John the Baptist Parish Council approved Change Order No. 1 to take advantage of an overrun of rock materials and construct more breakwater length than initially planned. In April, the Parish conducted a final site visit and will be requesting Parish Council's approval to issue substantial completion on all sections of the project this month.

The images to the right show the two northern most sections of the breakwater (just south of Frenier), constructed in late 2024. A significant accumulation of sediment can be seen over the past three to four months. As seen in the bottom left image, the project was featured during the February CPRA Board Meeting. More information on the project can be found on St. John the Baptist Parish's [website](#).



Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion Project: 90-Day Suspension of Work



On February 28th, 2025, Executive Assistant to the Governor for Coastal Activities Gordon Dove ordered a 90-day suspension of all work on the Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion Project. The project would reintroduce freshwater and sediment from the Mississippi River to the Basin to build, sustain, and maintain land. The project is designed to build 21 square miles of land within 50 years. Critics of the

project have argued that the high level of fresh water moving into the area would harm the shrimp and oyster industries and impact other marine life such as the bay's bottlenose dolphins.

According to Fox 8 [news](#), Dove explained that the final decision on the project will be, “based on a decision we can afford,” referring to the cost of the project over the last decade increasing from \$750 million to \$3.1 billion. Among other ideas, a downsized project roughly one third of the size of the original is being studied. Dove also clarified that the state would continue planning other projects such as a 23.5-mile-long land bridge stretching from Southern Plaquemines Parish to Lafourche Parish. Ultimately, any changes to the project would require an environmental evaluation by the US Army Corps of Engineers. For more information, view this news [article](#). Background information on the project can be viewed on CPRA's [website](#).

15-year Anniversary of Deepwater Horizon

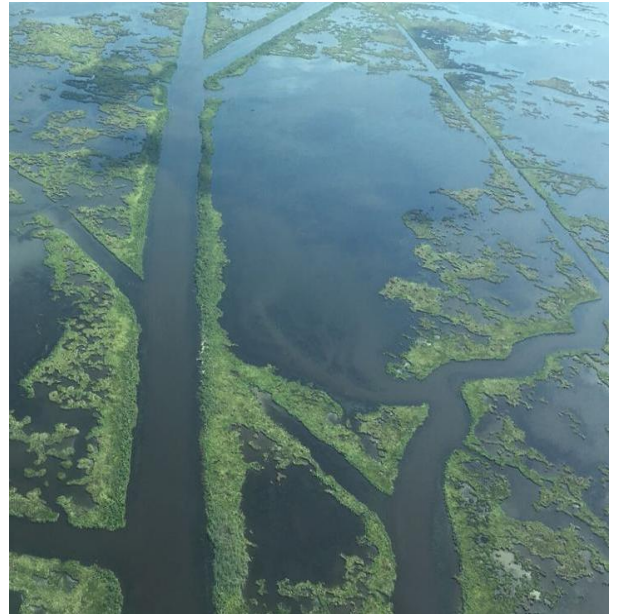
Sunday April 20th, 2025 marked the 15-year anniversary of the Deepwater Horizon oil rig explosion, which sent 134 million gallons of crude oil into the ocean and directly took the lives of 11 people. The spill remains the largest in history with oil flowing for 87 days before the well could be capped.



British Petroleum (BP), who bears responsibility for the spill, has paid billions in settlement damages that have funded many of the coastal restoration projects across Coastal Louisiana today. However, some local residents, volunteers, and workers who aided in cleanup efforts feel they have not received adequate compensation often because their claims have been difficult to prove in court. In a 2012 settlement, nearly 80 percent of those seeking compensation received \$1,300 or less. Check out this [page](#) for some more information on its impact to the ecosystem.

Louisiana Jury Orders Chevron to Pay \$744M

On Friday April 4th, 2025, a jury in Plaquemines Parish ordered Chevron to pay \$744 million in damages for its degradation of Louisiana's coastal wetlands. The case was the first of its kind to go before a jury and alleged that decades of oil and gas activity, including canal dredging and other infrastructure work, violated state permitting laws and accelerated the state's catastrophic land loss. Chevron was sued as the successor to Texaco. Chevron argued that the lawsuit was flawed because the activities in question were permitted, legal, and frequently conducted under federal direction. Additionally, Chevron repeatedly requested to move the case to federal court, which was ultimately unsuccessful. The verdict has faced criticism from Louisiana's oil and gas industry, citing negative consequences for the State's economy. However, legal and environmental experts see the verdict as a step in the right direction in fighting coastal erosion in Louisiana. More than 10,000 miles of canals through Louisiana's wetlands were created and never properly mitigated or repaired. The jury awarded \$575 million to make up for land loss, \$161 million for contamination, and \$8.6 million for abandoned equipment. According to attorneys suing Chevron, the \$744 million in damages will result in over \$1.1 billion allotted for coastal restoration with interest accruals. Learn more about the lawsuit from [AP news](#). An appeal of the decision is expected from Chevron.



CPRA Board Approves FY26 Annual Plan

On Wednesday April 16th, the CPRA Board unanimously approved the Agency's Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Annual Plan. The Plan outlines just under \$2 billion in spending for coastal restoration and protection, including the creation of new wetlands, home elevations, and levee projects. However, over a quarter of the projected spending (\$573 million) is allotted to the Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion that is currently on a 90-day suspension.

There are over 140 projects funded in the approved Annual Plan. This includes the State's portion of the ongoing WSLP Levee project that will help protect over 60,000 residents from storm surge across St. Charles, St. James, and St. John Parishes. See the full plan [here](#). You can also view an interactive version [here](#). The Plan still requires approval from the legislature and a signature from the Governor.

CPRA's FY26 Annual Plan also includes the Atchafalaya Basin Program FY 2026 Annual Plan. The Atchafalaya Basin Program was established to develop, implement, and manage a comprehensive state master plan for the Atchafalaya Basin Floodway System (ABFS) Louisiana Project (Atchafalaya State Master Plan). See the plan [here](#).



St. John the Baptist Parish

Coastal Updates

Manchac Greenway Master Plan

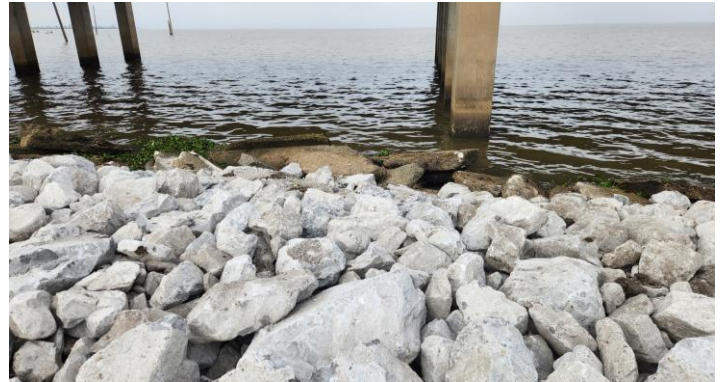


Grant agreement received final approval. RFQ to be released soon.

St. John the Baptist Parish is seeking funding to develop and create a Master Plan for the Manchac Greenway through the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States (RESTORE) Act. The Greenway is located on old highway 51 and Hammond Highway, connecting LaPlace and Ponchatoula. Greenways are land use tools that mix environmental protection with economic activity. In partnership with the Friends of the Manchac Greenway, the Master Plan will help St. John apply for and receive funding to construct projects related to ecosystem restoration, economic development, and tourism promotion. The Manchac Greenway will transform an underutilized part of the Parish into a model of sustainable land use for the region. The Parish has received final approval from the Treasury Department. A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) will be released soon.



Sunset Park Shoreline Restoration



Substantial Completion underway.

St. John the Baptist Parish secured a grant through CPRA's Conservation and Restoration Partnership Fund to design and construct a shoreline restoration project in Sunset Park. Substantial completion was declared on the project in early April. Next, native trees will be planted in the park.

Greater New Orleans Foundation (GNOF) Next 100 Years Challenge



Pilot project design process beginning soon.

St. John the Baptist Parish was one of ten recipients selected for a \$100,000 award to continue advancing green infrastructure solutions in the Parish. This award is intended to pilot a green infrastructure project and expedite a larger funding proposal for a comprehensive green infrastructure strategy. A contractor was selected to design and build the pilot project in April. Design should be beginning later in May.

Bayou Chevreuil Hydrologic Restoration



Project design is complete.

This restoration project will enhance approximately 1,880 acres through the hydrologic restoration of swampland between Bayou Chevreuil and the Vacherie Canal, where spoil banks have altered hydrology and increased flood stress on trees in the project area through impoundment. The construction of this project will transform the high flood stress area into a productive and resilient habitat, allowing it to persevere and regenerate on its own. Project design is complete, and the project is currently undergoing environmental permitting.



St. John
The Baptist Parish

Coastal and Water
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