

An aerial photograph of a coastal region. The top half shows green, vegetated land with some brown patches. The bottom half shows a large body of blue water with a sandy or light-colored shoreline. The text is overlaid on the top portion of the image.

Expert Panel on Diversion Planning and Implementation: Meeting #7

August 31, 2016

Expert Panel on Diversion Planning and Implementation: Background

- Convened to provide technical advice on planning and implementation of freshwater and sediment diversion projects
- Nearing end of 3rd year of meetings
- Expertise encompasses physical and biological sciences, social science, economics, and engineering
- Experience with Mississippi River and Louisiana restoration (or other large restoration projects)
- Independent and objective, but not in a position to make policy or implementation decisions

Charge to Expert Panel on Diversion Planning and Implementation

“Provide technical input, review and guidance as plans are refined on diverting freshwater and sediment from the Mississippi and Atchafalaya rivers into adjacent estuarine basins to build, maintain and sustain coastal wetlands”



Summary of Meeting #6

- Panel meeting was held October 27-28, 2015 at the Crowne Plaza and Water Institute in Baton Rouge
- Eleven background, update and perspective presentations from CPRA, USACE, TWIG, academic institutions, consulting companies, and others



Summary of Meeting #6

- First opportunity to see and comment on results of modeling for Fall 2015 Decision Point
- Focused on responding to questions in our charge in three broad areas:
 - (1) Patterns of change
 - (2) Use of results
 - (3) Refining analytical approach
- Report summarizes our findings and offers suggestions for improving analyses of land-building, vegetation, fish and shellfish communities, and socio-economics
- Four recommendations only!



Report #6 Recommendations

- #1. Explore through model interactions between diversions and other potential restoration tools ways to more aggressively enhance sediment retention and maximize process of land building.
- #2. Reconcile inconsistencies in fisheries modeling through rigorous assessment of model performance following a process similar to that used for land-building models, ensuring model formulations are parallel and that differences are understood and explained.
- #3. Express socio-economic outcomes as changes relation to FWOP and depict outcomes for all available time steps as opposed to outcomes in year 50 only.
- #4. Ensure that assumptions used in socio-economic analyses are fully stated and inconsistencies between biomass and socio-economic results are reconciled.

Meeting #6 Report

Report of Meeting #6 available at:
www.thewaterinstitute.org

Contents Include:

- Executive Summary
- Introduction and Background
- Focus of Meeting #6
- Response to the Charge
- Recommendations: Beyond 2015
Decision Point
- Appendices 1-3

EXPERT PANEL ON DIVERSION PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Report #6

January 2016

*Submitted to:
Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority*

Charge for August 2016 Panel Meeting

- Operational Management: Does the Panel have recommendations on approaches to operational decision making that ensure nimble and responsive actions while ensuring sediment delivery and land building? Are there key lessons from operational management of ecosystem restoration projects in other systems?
- Wetland Plants Response: Given that specific studies on wetland plant response will take several years to gain critical information, what types of assumptions does the Panel suggest to estimate the influence of increased inundation on wetland plants? Does the approach currently adopted seem reasonable?
- Technical Challenges: Given the expertise of the Panel, are there recommendations to CPRA on how to ensure appropriate and timely input outside the teams as the work proceeds?