BROADER EFFECTS OF DIVERSIONS

Compilation of Stakeholder Groups Diversion Comments

Karim Belhadjali | October 28, 2014
Timeline of Coastal Planning in Louisiana
Long History of Diversion Proposals


Plans which have included freshwater or sediment diversions
Our Communities and Livelihoods at Risk

Predicted Future Flooding from a 100 Year Flood Event

Future Without Action

Potential for damages to reach $23.4 billion annually

Increasing threats to lives, jobs, communities and the economy
Valuing Coastal Louisiana

- 2 million people live in coastal LA
- Largest port complex in the world
- 20% of the nation’s waterborne commerce
- 26% of the US commercial fisheries in the continental US
- $7 billion could be lost from Hwy 1 closure
- 5 million migratory waterfowl depend on LA habitat
CPRA has reviewed all stakeholder perceptions regarding coastal restoration and diversion projects.

From these stakeholder comments, CRPA created a “priority list” of major perceived negative impacts and key conflicts arising from diversions.
Sources of Comments

• Reviewed plans, reports, meetings, polls, and studies for public comments:

  - 2007 Coastal Master Plan public comments
  - 2012 Coastal Master Plan public comments
  - 2012 Coastal Master Plan Science & Engineering Board Reports
  - Draft 2015 Fiscal Annual Plan public comments
  - Governor’s Advisory Commission Meetings public comments
  - LCA Blind River Feasibility Scoping Report
  - MRHDM NEPA Scoping Report
  - LCA Modification of Caernarvon Freshwater Diversion Feasibility Study
  - LCA Modification of Davis Pond Diversion Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study
  - LCA Medium Diversion at White Ditch Restoration Feasibility Study
  - St. Bernard Parish Diversion Meeting
  - Vietnamese Fishing Community Concerns via CCC
  - 2012 Louisiana Coastal Master Plan Public Opinion Survey by National Audubon Society
  - LCA Medium Diversion at Myrtle Grove EIS
  - Louisiana Speaks public comments
  - America’s WETLAND Foundation National Poll: Support of Federal Investment to Protect America’s Energy Coast Ecosystem
  - Louisiana Statewide Survey on Importance of Coastal Restoration by America’s WETLAND Foundation
  - Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion Stakeholder Round Table Meeting
  - USACE Mississippi River Hydrodynamic and Delta Management Study Public Meeting
  - Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority Board meetings
  - Coastal Protection and Restoration Financing Corporation
  - Oyster Advisory Committee Meetings
  - New Orleans Business Council meeting
  - Louisiana Senate Natural Resources Committee
  - Diversion Advisory Panel Meetings
  - Diversion Subcommittee Meeting
  - Mid-Barataria Public Meetings
  - Shrimp Task Force Meetings
  - Oyster Task Force Meetings
Received Comments from

- Citizens, Federal, State, NGO, industry, civic group, etc.:  

  - Public Citizens
    - Environmental Defense Fund (EDF)
    - Louisiana Shrimp Association
    - North Lafourche Levee District
    - Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation (LPBF)
    - National Wildlife Federation
    - Gulf Restoration Network
    - Restore or Retreat
    - Louisiana Bayou Keeper
    - Louisiana Speaks
    - Citizens of Plaquemines Eastbank (COPE)
    - South Central Industrial Association
    - Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana
    - The Nature Conservancy
    - NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
    - National Audubon Society
    - Louisiana Oyster Dealers & Growers Association
    - Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries
    - Conoco Phillips
    - Lafourche Basin Levee District
    - University of New Orleans
    - Mississippi River Basin Alliance (MRBA)
    - Ascension Parish Representatives
    - Little Lake Duck Club
    - East Ascension Sportsman’s League
    - Cameron Parish Police Jury
    - St. Bernard Parish Councilman
    - Biloxi Marsh Lands Corporation (BMLC)
    - United Houma Nation
    - St. Charles Parish Council
    - Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans
    - Louisiana Society of Naturalists

  - Professional Organizations
    - Sierra Club
    - LSU
    - U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
    - Continental Land & Fur Co. Inc.
    - St. Bernard Parish Coastal Zone Advisory Committee
    - CL&F Resources LP
    - Apache Louisiana Minerals LLC
    - LSU Agricultural Center
    - Morganza Action Coalition
    - Louisiana Landowners Association
    - Barataria Terrebonne Natural Estuary Program (BTNEP)
    - National Resources Conservation Services
    - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
    - Lafourche Parish Coastal Zone Management Advisory Committee
    - Mississippi River Delta Restoration Campaign
    - Bayou Grace Community Services
    - Jefferson Parish Environmental Affairs
    - Holy Cross Neighborhood Association
    - Louisiana Environmental Action Network (LEAN)
    - Louisiana Wildlife Federation
    - Terrebonne Parish Coastal Restoration & Preservation
    - Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation
    - Terrebonne Parish Coastal Zone Management and Restoration Advisement Committee
    - Terrebonne Levee and Conservation District
    - St. John the Baptist Parish Director of Planning & Zoning
    - Randy Moertle and Associates
    - Louisiana Oyster Task Force (LOTF)
    - R&A Oyster Co.
    - Plaquemines Parish Coastal Zone Management
    - American Institute of Fisheries
    - Louisiana Highway 1 Coalition
    - Mississippi River Basin Alliance (MRBA)
    - Ascension Parish Representatives
    - Little Lake Duck Club
    - East Ascension Sportsman’s League
    - Cameron Parish Police Jury
    - St. Bernard Parish Councilman
    - Biloxi Marsh Lands Corporation (BMLC)
    - United Houma Nation
    - St. Charles Parish Council
    - Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans
    - Louisiana Society of Naturalists
2007 Coastal Master Plan Public Meetings

6
LA Recovery Authority Louisiana Speaks Workshops
(Jul. – Aug. 2006)

10
Preliminary Draft Master Plan Meetings
(Nov. 2006 – Jan. 2007)

50+
Stakeholder Workshops & Meetings
(Jul. – Nov. 2006)

4
Draft Master Plan Public Hearings & Meeting
(New Orleans, Houma, Lake Charles, Abbeville)

1
Cameron Parish Police Jury Sponsored Meeting
(Mar. 2007)

1,500+
Public Comments received on 2007 Draft Plan
2012 Coastal Master Plan Public Meetings

15 Focus Group Meetings
Ports & Navigation, Fisheries, Oil & Gas

116 Presentations to Civic, Business, & Non-Profit Groups

87 Stakeholder Outreach Meetings

10 Regional Community Meetings
(Jul. – Sept. 2011)

3 Open House + Public Meetings
(New Orleans, Houma, Lake Charles)

2,200+ Public Comments received on 2012 Draft Plan
Public Meetings - Diversions

153

Public Meetings on Diversions

(1991- Present)
Diversion Comment Stats.

34,138 = Total comments reviewed

- 451 comments related to diversions
  - Of this: 212 were negative

Diversion comments are 1.3% of the coastal restoration conversation
Key Diversion Concerns

1. Negative fisheries impacts (displacement of fisheries, fisheries kills, loss of livelihoods)
2. Doubts land building potential to reduce storm surge risk
3. Prefer smaller diversions instead of the larger planned diversions
4. Prefer dredging over diversion projects
5. Flooding concerns / increased water levels
6. Concerns regarding nutrients and invasive species
7. Large diversions take too long to build land
8. Diversions will not rebuild or sustain Cypress forests
Stakeholder Perceived Positive Impacts of Diversions

- Enhances ecological benefits
- Reestablishes historic habitats
- Provides infusion of freshwater needed to sustain agricultural producing lands and coastal vegetated marshes
- Beneficial to the wildlife management areas
- Reduces salinities and increases wetland creation and habitat quality
- Represents a significant building block for restoring the wetlands
- Effectively addresses saltwater intrusion, soil subsidence, wave action erosion, and sediment deprivation - important components in the fight against coastal erosion
THANK YOU