

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS P.O. BOX 60267 NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70160-0267

Operations Division Regulatory Branch

February 24, 2014

SPECIAL PUBLIC NOTICE

ANNOUNCING A PROPOSED COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS AND THE STATE OF LOUISIANA, COASTAL PROTECTION AND RESTORATION AUTHORITY

This Public Notice announces the proposed intent of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), New Orleans District (MVN), to accept and expend funds for the purpose of providing expedited review of the proposed Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion (MBSD) permit application and Section 408 request for the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) within the boundaries of MVN.

CPRA has applied for a Department of the Army permit pursuant to Section 10 (33 U.S.C. 403) of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) and has requested additional authorization pursuant to Section 14 (33 U.S.C. 408) (Section 408) of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 for a proposed Mississippi River sediment diversion at approximately 60.4 miles above head of passes, right descending bank, in Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana. To support their desire for a thorough and expedited review, CPRA wishes to enter into an agreement with MVN to contribute funds to allow for the expedited evaluation of the MBSD submittals pursuant to the guidelines promulgated under Section 214 of the Federal Water Resources Development Act of 2000. A Cooperative Agreement will be developed between MVN and CPRA in anticipation of acceptance of such funds. The funds may be used by MVN for salaries, associated benefits, actual burdened overhead rates, and reimbursable travel expenses, all for the purpose of expediting evaluation activities and programmatic issues.

Such evaluation activities would include, but are not limited to, the following: application completeness review, jurisdictional determinations, site visits, preparation of public notices, public hearings, preparation of correspondence, meetings (with the applicant, internal entities, agencies and general public), coordination concerning endangered species and cultural resources, public interest reviews, analysis of alternatives, compensatory mitigation proposal reviews including the establishment of mitigation plans, the preparation of environmental assessments and permit decision documents, Section 408 evaluations, data entry, and clerical responsibilities.

If any of the CPRA funds are fully expended and/or are not renewed, the remaining priority review activities would be handled like those of any other non-participant, in a manner decided by the assigned personnel and his/her supervisor. To ensure the funds will not impact impartial decision-making, the following procedures would apply:

- a. All final decisions, for cases where these funds are used, must be reviewed at least one level above the decision-maker, unless the decision maker is the District Commander, and/or the Director of Civil Works, Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
- b. All final decisions, for cases where these funds are used, will be made available on MVN's web page.
- c. MVN will not eliminate any procedures or decisions that would otherwise be required for the type of project under consideration.
- d. MVN will comply with all applicable laws and regulations.
- e. Funds will only be expended to provide priority review of CPRA's MBSD permit application and Section 408 request.

We do not expect priority review of the MBSD proposal to negatively impact MVN's Programs, or to increase the time for evaluations of other projects.

MVN is soliciting comments from the public, federal, state and local agencies, and officials, and other interested parties. Comments will be made part of the record, and they will be considered in determining whether it would be in the public interest to proceed with this action. If the District Commander determines, after considering public comments, that the acceptance and expenditure of the funds is in compliance with the authorities listed above and is not otherwise contrary to the general public interest, MVN will implement and accept the funds from the entity identified above. A second public notice will be issued regarding the District Commander's final decision on this matter.

Interested parties may submit, in writing, any comments concerning this proposal. Comments should refer to this Special Public Notice, and be forwarded by the comment due date, which is **March 10, 2014**. Comments must be sent to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District, Regulatory Branch; ATTN: Martin S. Mayer, Post Office Box 60267, New Orleans, Louisiana 70160-0267.

If you have any questions, please contact Martin S. Mayer at (504) 862-2255 or by e-mail at Martin.S.Mayer@usace.army.mil.

Martin S. Mayer Chief, Regulatory Branch

COASTAL PROTECTION AND RESTORATION AUTHORITY ENGINEERING DIVISION STATE OF LOUISIANA

SEDIMENT DIVERSION MID-BARATARIA

STATE PROJECT NO. BA-153 PLAQUEMINES PARISH, LOUISIANA

STATE OF LOUISIANA

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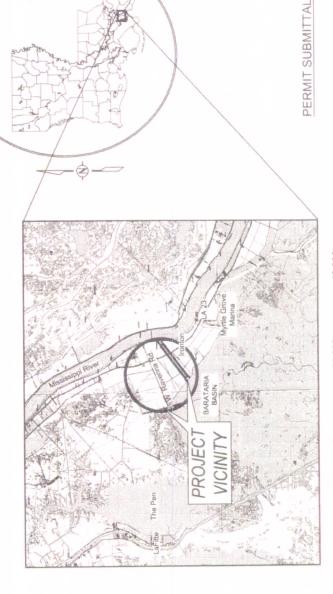
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COVER SHEET

MID-BARATARIA SEDIMENT DIVERSION





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HDD	DESIGNED BY PGG	APPROVED BY: PAMELA GONZALES GRANGER, P.E.	DR



