Louisiana’s Watersheds

Our watersheds are not defined by any of our political boundaries.
Special Flood Hazard Areas

- 26,826 square miles in the SFHA
- 51.21% of the State

Source: Louisiana Watershed Resiliency Study. Map 3.5.1. FEMA; dated updated 20 July 2017
2016 March & August Floods

Combined total of 145,000 structures impacted

- March = 21 inches
- August = 30 inches

Impacted Structures
- March 2016 Floods
- August 2016 Floods
“It’s harder. It requires more work. It’s politically risky, but it is THE RIGHT THING TO DO.”

Governor John Bel Edwards
Louisiana Watershed Initiative Timeline

- **2014**: CPRA investigates the alignment of flood protection authorities with watershed boundaries as part of its response to Louisiana Senate Resolution 39.
- **2016**: CPRA, DOH, COHSEP, and OCD convene to investigate opportunities for statewide floodplain management.
- **2017 November**: Cooperating agencies undertake interviews and research for the Phase I Program Development, Research and Evaluation.
- **2017-2018**: November - January
- **2018 February**: LDWF integrated as a cooperating agency.
- **2018 May**: Phase I report completed.
- **2018 June - Present**: The Council initiates Phase II and forms Technical Advisory Groups.
- **2018 May**: Governor John Bel Edwards signs into law Executive Order establishing the cooperating agencies as the operating Council on Watershed Management.
How is the Louisiana Watershed Initiative different?

Utilizes recovery dollars in a **proactive** rather than **reactive** approach.

The goal is to improve water management *before* the next disaster and develop an **enduring** program for water management.
Strategic Areas of Focus

- Funding
- Integrated Planning
- Capability & Capacity
- Data
- Standards
- Engagement
The Council is supported by Technical Advisory Groups (TAGs) who ensure integration of stakeholder input and transparency of process.

TAGs are working to:

ALIGINING THE EXISTING PROGRAMS, POLICIES, PRACTICES WITHIN LOUISIANA WITH MISSION AND GOALS OF THE LWI

SUPPORT FROM:

- SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS
- ACADEMIA
- RESEARCH
- PRIVATE SECTOR
- STAKEHOLDERS
Provisional Regional Steering Committees

Sharing responsibility for resilient decision-making and implementation

- Organized within watershed-based boundaries
- 11-13 residents with diverse areas of expertise in watershed issues

Continuous input from additional stakeholders and experts
Next steps

Ongoing coordination with locals and the State to complete:

- Statewide Modeling
- Procurement Strategy
- 2019 Engagement Strategy
- Project Evaluation Criteria & Round 1 Application
Overall Approach

STATEWIDE DATA & MODELING

• Pilot model for the Amite River Basin
• Enhanced data inputs: rain and stream gauges, LiDAR, etc.
• Expert leadership on modeling design, maintenance, and usage/storage
• Predictive, contiguous modeling framework - models will “talk to each other”
Statewide Modeling Framework

STRATEGY AND SEQUENCE

• DOTD will facilitate procurement and contract management
• Advertisements are posted on DOTD’s website
• Regional stakeholders & agencies able to provide input in accordance with DOTD’s procurement process
• Models sequenced around watershed boundaries in accordance with data availability
Round 1 Funding Opportunity (Proposed)

COOPERATIVE

COMPETITIVE

PROCESS

$40M WATERSHED REGIONS

$60M STATEWIDE

PENDING HUD GUIDANCE
Thank You

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