

March, 18 2008

Coastal Protection & Restoration Authority Integrated Planning Team
c/o Louisiana Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 94396
Baton Rouge, LA70804-9396

Re: CPRA FY 09 Annual Plan

Dear Team Members:

The Houma-Terrebonne Chamber of Commerce is proud to represent nearly 1,000 businesses and individuals within Terrebonne Parish, the majority of whom live, work and play in this critical region of the state. We value the abundant natural resources that make this parish such a wonderful place to live and a productive location to operate a business, but we also know that the sustainability of our community and the benefits it provides our nation is totally dependent on effective hurricane protection and coastal restoration. With this in mind, we respectfully submit the following comments on the draft of the *Fiscal Year 2009 Annual Plan: Ecosystem Restoration and Hurricane Protection in Coastal Louisiana*.

As a starting point, this organization would like to see greater detail in the FY 09 Annual Plan, specifically a prioritization of projects with greater descriptions and cost projections for each over the next two-year period. A summary of progress to date and goals for the current year would also be very useful for Louisiana citizens and decision-makers reading and interpreting the plan. Clearly, having an identified list of priority projects and their cost projections is essential as additional state funds become available for restoration and protection projects.

Secondly, the Houma-Terrebonne Chamber of Commerce asks that funding priority be placed on the Morganza-to-the-Gulf Hurricane Protection System and the installation of the Houma Navigational Canal Lock. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has placed a priority on the protection surrounding the metropolitan New Orleans region, and we urge the State to place its own priority on protecting the most vulnerable metropolitan area of the state currently without hurricane protection: Terrebonne Parish.

With regard to specific restoration projects, there is one glaring hole in the FY 09 draft necessary for effective restoration in the Barataria and Terrebonne basins—the advancement of a federal feasibility study for a large scale, and long term restoration solution. While we wholeheartedly agree that urgent action is needed in our quest to halt land loss, we cannot rush to construct near-term strategies alone. While near-term projects can serve as our life-support for a limited time, it is only large-scale, long-term, naturally systemic and sustainable solutions that offer a real future for our coast, specifically in this region suffering the highest land loss rates in the world. We request that a high priority be placed on the advancement of a federal feasibility study on the Third Delta concept, either alone (as approved in LCA/WRDA) or in conjunction with the Mississippi River Hydrodynamic and Delta Study. Only after this federal feasibility study can any real progress be made.

The Houma-Terrebonne Chamber of Commerce supports the inclusion of ongoing projects, such as Davis Pond and the Mississippi River Reintroduction into Bayou Lafourche, which have the potential to positively impact our region. However, freshwater from these projects will not be optimized without additional man-made control boundaries that can be mechanically created through the long distance conveyance of sediment via pipeline. At a construction cost of \$34 million alone, designated Coastal Impact Assistance Program funds will not be enough to fully implement, operate and maintain the long distance sediment pipeline project. We encourage the CPRA to target trust fund or portions of the budget surplus to adequately fund a minimum of two years of operations and maintenance expenses of this long distance pipeline.

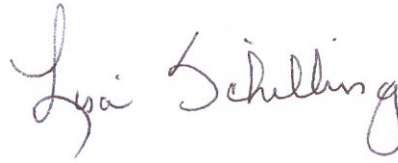
In summary, it is vital that the FY 09 Annual Plan accurately reflect the undisputable need of Terrebonne Parish for effective hurricane protection and both near-term and long-term restoration strategies in order to fulfill the intent of the State's Master Plan and honor the men and women who call this part of Louisiana home. We ask for your commitment to prioritize and fund these needs, and then implement them as aggressively and expeditiously as possible.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Drake Pothier". The signature is stylized with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Drake Pothier
President & CEO
Houma-Terrebonne Chamber of Commerce

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa Schilling". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Lisa Schilling
Chairman of the Board
Houma-Terrebonne Chamber of Commerce