

LWI Region 8 Steering Committee

Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, & St. Charles Parishes

LWI Capacity Building Grant – Region 8 Regional Steering Committee Meeting

October 28th, 2021 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Agenda

- I. **Regional Steering Committee Introductions**
- II. **Roll Call**
- III. **Approval of June 24th, 2021 Minutes** *(vote required)*
- IV. **LWI Program Updates**
 - a. Updates from the RPC
 - b. Updates & Comments from LWI state representatives
- V. **State Levee Districts Tax Amendment Discussion**
- VI. **Watershed Monitoring, Mapping and Modeling Program Presentation**
- VII. **Public Comment**
- VIII. **Questions/Adjourn** *(vote required)*

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Minutes

I. Regional Steering Committee Introductions

- a. Online meeting etiquette: Microphones/Phones on mute unless you are speaking. Questions may be asked via the question box. Votes: Motion, second, & voice/chat box tall (committee members only). Public comments will be at the end of the meeting, notify staff via question box or verbally.

II. Roll Call

- a. Present
 - i. Tyler Antrup
 - ii. Stephanie Bruning
 - iii. Jessica Dandridge
 - iv. Matt Falati
 - v. Danielle Honor
 - vi. Chris Humphreys
 - vii. Albertine Kimble
 - viii. Blaise Pezold
 - ix. Maggie Talley
- b. Absent
 - i. Ken Dugas
 - ii. Meagan Williams

III. Approval of June 24, 2021 Minutes

- a. Moved by: Albertine Kimble
- b. Seconded by: Blaise Pezold
- c. Unanimous in favor to approve the June 24, 2021 minutes.

IV. LWI Program Updates

- a. Updates from the RPC
 - i. Post-Ida DRRRA Assistance: Tom Haysley stated that all Region 8 parishes are eligible for FEMA assistance for Hurricane Ida related building code, floodplain management, and enforcement work. He stated that RPC staff may be able to help parishes identify resources if they have not already taken advantage of the program.

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- ii. Regional Resilience Plan Outline: Tom Haysley provided an update on the RPC's work to create a Regional Resilience Plan as part of its work with LWI. The plan will be an internally guiding document for the RPC and will provide policies and procedures for incorporating resilience into all RPC programs. It will also coordinate with other regional plans such as the upcoming regional watershed plan, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.
 - iii. RPC Environmental Advisory Group: Tom Haysley informed the committee that the RPC intends to form an environmental advisory group that will provide input to the RPC on topics related to resilience and environmental planning. The group would include membership from all eight RPC parishes and not be limited to LWI Region 8, but it would still include RSC members that could act on LWI-specific matters. The current plan is to have the new advisory groups replace the RSC in the coming months. At the next RSC meeting staff will present more information and see the committee's input on next steps.
- b. Updates & Comments from LWI state representatives
- i. Round 2 Project Funding:
 - 1. Nicolette Jones (OCD) stated that preparation for LWI Round 2 projects is moving forward. A design support program will be created to help applicants develop applications that conform to the program's requirements and \$6 million has been set aside for Region 8. As in Round 1, all projects must provide a benefit to one of the designated Most Impacted and Distressed (MID) parishes from the 2016 floods to be eligible for funding. Nicolette Jones also stated that additional funds will be available through LWI in the future through FEMA's HMGP program that will not have the MID limitations.
 - 2. Kay Lesage (OCD) added that one of the state's priorities for Round 2 is to make sure projects are funded in Region 8. These may include projects that were submitted under BRIC or HMGP and not just projects submitted in Round 1. The state has also allocated \$20 million in HMGP funds to LWI, and that may be used to fund projects without the MID restriction. She stated that right now the state wants to maintain a dialogue through the end of the year to make sure projects get completed in Region 8.
 - 3. Albertine Kimble asked if HMGP funds could be used for elevations. Kay Lesage said that elevation should be eligible but details are still being worked out.
 - ii. Enabling Legislation:
 - 1. Nicolette Jones gave an update on the state's efforts to create enabling legislation for the watershed coalitions. The state is currently working to incorporate the regions' governance recommendations into legislation and

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get it approved by the governor's office.

2. Chris Humphreys asked if there were similarities between the different regions' recommendations and if there is any information available about how the framework will work. Nicolette Jones stated that there were many similarities but some regions differed in specific tasks that should be completed by the coalition. She said they are attempting to create legislation that will enable all proposed activities. She also said that the regional recommendations are available online. Kay Lesage added that they will be compiling a legislative package to present but the final law will depend on what legislators vote on. She said that regions should discuss their preferences with their legislators and that Henry Consulting is working on tools to help communicate on this topic.
3. Jessica Dandridge asked if there would be any working groups to help develop the legislation and if assistance would be provided for outreach to legislators. Kay Lesage and Nicolette Jones stated that assistance will be provided. Tom Haysley stated that it is also important to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the RPC and committee members. Kay Lesage said this would be included in the training.

V. State Levee Districts Tax Amendment Discussion

- a. Tom Haysley stated that the November ballot will include consideration of constitutional Amendment #3, which would allow certain levee districts to levy an annual tax. He stated that the committee members should be aware of the amendment and learn about its implications so they can discuss it with the public and others within their agency.

VI. Watershed Monitoring, Mapping and Modeling Program Presentation

- a. Ehab Meselhe (Tulane University) gave an update on the Model Use, Storage and Maintenance Plan (MUSM). The plan describes recommendations for future maintenance and use of the hydraulic models currently being created by LWI. There are multiple potential approaches to model maintenance (Central, Blended, Regional, or Federated) and the state is currently seeking input on which approach is preferred. It is estimated that Region 8 would require one FTE H&H modeler as well as associated IT infrastructure. Under the regional approach this would cost the region approximately \$189,642 annually if staff is housed within a regional agency or \$399,722 annually if a consultant is hired.
- b. Tom Haysley asked what the next steps are for selecting a recommendation. Ehab Meselhe said that they may develop a prototype of the system with a beta user group that includes region from each region. The user group could test the prototype and allow for informed decision making. Tom Haysley asked how the final decision will be made. Sarah McEwan (OCD) stated that they are collecting regional input and the modeling working group will make a recommendation. From that, the Council on Watershed Management will

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make a determination. Kay LeSage stated that their current focus is on getting input from end users. Tom Haysley asked what the timeline is and what kind of communication should be expected. Kay LeSage said they are working on a report that will provide updates during the process.

- c. Tom Haysley asked if a funding source has been identified for long term maintenance costs. Kay LeSage said no, that would be part of the legislative package currently under development.
- d. Maggie Talley asked what the timeline would be for local governments to identify funding for maintenance requirements. Sarah McEwan stated that the costs would be determined by the final recommendation for maintenance and would not come into place until the models are complete. Ehab Meselhe stated that this would likely not occur until 2023.
- e. The modeling team asked if there were any other comments or input. Tom Haysley stated that he would share the information with other RPC staff, but his current major consideration is staff and funding capacity to complete the modeling tasks.

VII. Public Comment

- a. No public comments.

VIII. Questions/Adjourn *(vote required)*

- a. Vote to adjourn
 - i. Moved by: Maggie Talley
 - ii. Seconded by: Albertine Kimble
 - iii. Unanimous in favor to adjourn.