Public Comment
Consent Agenda Items
Opening Remarks
Old Business
New Business

RECOMMENDATIONS
01 / Amite River Watershed Pilot Program

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

- Attain local and regional feedback on the establishment of a pilot program to use the Amite River Model for development review and permitting
- Enables state and regional collaboration
02 / Amite River Watershed Pilot Program

STATE AGENCY PROJECT PRIORITIZATION

- Implement the use of watershed modeling within a single state agency for project prioritization and funding processes
- Enables establishment of best practices and guidance for use of watershed models
Updates

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT
ABOUT WATERSHEDS
What is a Watershed?

The land area that drains to a single water body - affects water quality and quantity in the water body that it surrounds.
Guiding Principles of a Watershed Management Approach

**PARTNERSHIPS:** Those most affected by management decisions are involved throughout and shape key decisions.

**GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS:** Activities are directed within specific geographic areas, typically those that drain to surface water bodies or that recharge or overlay ground waters or a combination of both.

**SOUND MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES BASED ON STRONG SCIENCE AND DATA:** Collectively, watershed stakeholders employ sound scientific data, tools, and techniques in an iterative decision-making process.
Louisiana’s Watersheds

Our watersheds are not defined by our political boundaries.
ABOUT LOUISIANA
Louisiana’s State Claimed Waterbodies

- 900 named bayous
- 110 named rivers
- 242 named lakes

*Actions in one community can impact entire systems.*

*(SOURCE: LOUISIANA STATE LANDS OFFICE AND LOUISIANA DNR’S SONRIS GEODATABASE)*
Elevation and Hydrography

Louisiana is very FLAT. We are the fourth-flattest state in the nation.

Within the flatter (orange, brown, yellow) areas, it becomes more difficult to predict how water will be absorbed.
Special Flood Hazard Areas

Regulated by FEMA through the National Flood Insurance Program

- 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 August and March Floods

Combined total of 145,000 structures impacted.

More than 7.1 trillion gallons of rain.
ABOUT

THE LOUISIANA WATERSHED INITIATIVE
Timeline

2014
- SR39

2016
- March & August
  - Historic Floods

2017
- November
  - Agencies investigate opportunities for floodplain management alignment

2017-2018
- November thru January
  - Phase 1 Program Development and Research

2018
- May
  - Phase 1 Report Completed

2018
- May
  - EO JBE 2018 – 16 Signed

2018
- June-Present
  - The Council Initiates Phase II and forms Technical Advisory Groups
OUR MISSION

Reduce flood risk and improve floodplain management across the state, including through maximizing the natural and beneficial functions of the floodplain.
Strategic Areas of Focus

- Funding
- Integrated Planning
- Capability & Capacity
- Data
- Standards
- Engagement
The goal is to improve water management to proactively address flood risk and mitigation.
Set the stage for state agency coordination - alignment of programs, policies, and practices

$1.2 BILLION HUD CDBG ALLOCATION

Creates opportunity for long-term governance structures, demonstration projects, adoption of higher development standards, improved policies and approaches
What do we know today about water management and flood risk reduction?

WE UNDERSTAND

• Water knows no boundaries.
• It requires a new way of thinking.
• It requires a watershed approach.
• We need to address inland and coastal flooding to mitigate future flood loss.
Current efforts tailor best practices to LA

PILOT PROJECTS:
• Amite River Basin Model
• State Agency Resilience Internal Audit
• State Agency H&H Model Use in Project Prioritization
• H&H Model Use in Local Development Review
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DATA & MODELING
- Extensive Data Gap Analysis
- RFQs for 7 modeling watershed regions currently advertised
- Investigation re: implementation statewide monitoring network anticipated May 30th
Current efforts tailor best practices to LA

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REGIONAL MANAGEMENT
• Consensus building around provisional regional watershed boundaries/steering committee composition
Louisiana Watershed Initiative *Listens*
Transparent & Collaborative Approach to Program Design

**FALL 2018**

*8 REGIONAL CONFERENCES*

Locals informing the process

engineers, planners, floodplain managers, public works staff, emergency responders, code enforcement staff, elected officials, and more

555
Louisiana Watershed Initiative *Listens*
Transparent & Collaborative Approach to Program Design

**WINTER 2019**
TWO DAYS IN HARD HIT AREAS
National experts informing the process

150 local, state, and national experts in attendance and another 1,000+ who joined us online
Louisiana Watershed Initiative listens
Transparent & Collaborative Approach to Program Design

SPRING 2019

36 PARISHES – PART 1

Local leaders inform the process

To date, we’ve engaged nearly 190 attendees
Representative of 36 parishes located in the state’s most impacted watersheds
Parish Leadership Meetings Recap

LOCAL VOICES

“How can you be 65 feet above sea level and still flood?”

“Streets we’ve never seen go under water, are going under water, because everything is full.”

“With the expected snow melt, and June peak river heights, we are—again—preparing for the worst.”
International Best Practices Workshop with Henk Ovink

MAY 24, 2019

Center for Coastal and Deltaic Solutions, Baton Rouge

Ovink shared his experiences addressing flood risk in The Netherlands and around the world (e.g., overlapping jurisdictions and long-term governance around flood risk issues)

LWI Council and technical advisory group members were able to share their most pressing challenges, ask questions and seek guidance to guide ongoing program and planning efforts
International Best Practices Workshop with Henk Ovink

MAY 24, 2019

“Data without THE PROCESS is worthless.”

“Focusing on both long-term GOVERNANCE and short-term DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS will be key to the Initiative’s success.”

– Henk Ovink

LWI Council and technical advisory group members were able to share their most pressing challenges, ask questions and seek guidance to guide ongoing program and planning efforts.
Provisional Regional Steering Committees

SHARING RESPONSIBILITY FOR RESILIENT DECISION-MAKING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Technical Advisory Groups

- Projects
- Data & Modeling
- Policy

Council on Watershed Management

Regional Steering Committees

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

Continuous input from additional stakeholders and experts
Parish Leadership Meetings Recap

FEEDBACK AND FINDINGS

• Input provided on two priority topics:
  - Provisional Watershed Boundaries
  - Proposed Regional Steering Committees

• Provided a better understanding of impacts, a sense of urgency and engagement in the Initiative’s mission

• Feedback captured through exit surveys and LWI staff reports/parish feedback form
Provisional Regional Steering Committees

SHARING RESPONSIBILITY FOR RESILIENT DECISION-MAKING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Regional Steering Committees

• Organized within watershed-based boundaries
• Minimum 11-13 residents with diverse areas of expertise in watershed issues
Provisional Regional Geographic Boundaries

DRAFT: FOR DISCUSSION
Parish Leadership Meetings Recap

SURVEY FINDINGS

• **Provisional Watershed Boundary Delineation**
  - Overwhelming support in favor of delineating

• **Regional Steering Committee Composition**
  - Highest-priority membership recommendations included:
    • Floodplain managers
    • Local drainage or levee district representatives
    • Local engineers
Parish Leadership Meetings Recap

REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Floodplain manager: 8.7
- Drainage or levee district: 8.5
- Local engineer: 8.1
- Planning/development district: 7.1
- Soil/water conservation: 6.9
- Builder, developer: 5.1
- Environmental nonprofit: 5.1
- Regional chamber of commerce: 5
- Real estate, insurance or banking: 5
- Other: 2.9
Parish Leadership Meetings Recap

ADDITIONAL KEYS AREAS OF FEEDBACK

- Need for increased collaboration across multiple parish boundaries and larger regions
- Planning that remains proactive versus reactive
- Refining provisional watershed regions and boundaries where feasible
Parish Leadership Meetings

PARISH LEADERSHIP SURVEY: SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK

• Seeking feedback from parish leaders and staff on provisional watershed boundaries, regional steering committee composition, and more

• Visit the link below to take a quick survey and share your feedback:

  WATERSHED.LA.GOV/REGIONALSURVEY
Updates

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES
MAY 29-JUNE 6 2019

Louisiana State Capitol
Baton Rouge, LA

Includes an overview of progress to-date

Information packets with key program information, parish leadership meeting updates, and LWI staff contact information to be distributed
Interstate Summit

JUNE 12, 2019

Bossier Civic Center, Bossier City

Focus on bringing together state and regional counterparts in Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas and Mississippi to build partnerships and enhance coordination of water management issues across state lines.

Free and open to the public – attendees will include state, regional and local leadership working on flood risk reduction programs or initiatives near state lines in Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas and Mississippi.

RSVP today at: WATERSHED.LA.GOV/INTERSTATE-SUMMIT-RSVP
Next Steps

REGIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING GRANT PROGRAM:
SUMMER 2019
Capacity Building Grant Program

OBJECTIVE
Enhance the capacity of local floodplain management and mitigation efforts, watershed coalitions, and other regional entities

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES
- Coalition-building
- Policy development/evaluation
- Grant application support
- Program development
- Planning/plan alignment efforts
- Outreach, education, and training
- Other non-structural activities that support floodplain management and risk reduction
Program Description

**ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

- Planning and Development Districts (PDDs)
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)

- Watershed-Based Regional Entities (Groups of parishes and other local/regional governments that convene within a defined watershed-based region)

**ANTICIPATED TIMELINE**

- **SUMMER 2019**
  - Council presentation and webinar

- **SUMMER 2019**
  - Open NOFA

- **FALL 2019**
  - Award Notices
Next Steps

STATEWIDE RIVER AND RAIN GAUGE MONITORING NETWORK
Building the Network

A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

• Public meeting with industries
• Development of backbone network in collaboration with USGS and other agencies
• Collection of stakeholder feedback on preliminary network design
• Assessment of costs circulated within LWI
• Issuance of a statewide RFP, pending guidelines in the Federal Register Notice
Next Steps

CDBG-MIT FUNDING ACTION PLAN APPROVAL PROCESS
$1.2B CDBG-MIT Funding

REQUIRED NEXT STEPS ARE TIME CONSUMING

1. Updated Action Plan (*in development*) in response to FRN
2. LWI Council Meeting to review/approve summary & budget
3. Proposed Action Plan published, including a minimum 30-day period for citizen review and comment (*pre-submittal*)
4. HUD review and approval of the Action Plan takes up to 45 days; more to address comments, revisions, or plan denial
5. Before disbursing funds to any organization that is carrying out CDBG activities, a written agreement must be executed
Public Comment
Closing Remarks
Thank You