



2018 LISTENING TOUR: REGION 5

BUILDING ON REGIONAL INPUT

The Louisiana Watershed Initiative hosted a Statewide Listening Tour in 2018 with more than 30 meetings held throughout the state's eight watershed regions. This document outlines input provided by Region 5 stakeholders, which informed early LWI efforts and guides the program today.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM TECHNICAL PROFESSIONALS

EXPANDING THE GAUGE NETWORK

- Adequate placement of gauges is most important in terms of data gathering and storage.
- Gauges on the same datum would streamline the use of those readings.
- Additional data capacity and additional gauges within the network should be top priorities.

SHARING DATA

- Outdated resources and data isolation have led to data hoarding.
- The state should share all the data associated with a project once it is completed.
- Data collaboration produces more robust datasets to inform academic research and guide decision-making.
- The state must consider short-term and long-term collection efforts to ensure the continuity and lasting integrity of data management efforts.
- Data needs to have a specific purpose and scope for accurate modeling use.
- LWI must standardize all data collection and sharing to form a foundation from which to collaborate.

MODELING

- The modeling process must be continuous. Models should not sit on a shelf.
- Models should be developed and maintained regionally and locally as opposed to at the state level.
- The use of living models to inform funding decisions will drive more efficient funding distribution.
- Layered modeling with models from different agencies can provide for a central, complex-use model.
- Modeling efforts should strike a balance between meeting local goals and collective statewide goals for flood risk reduction.
- The state should prioritize expansion of the gauge network, collection of rainfall data and modeling efforts, while the region should focus on discharge data, land-use considerations, quality and intensity of data gathered and integrating data into a common regional strategy.



WHAT WE HEARD FROM PLANNING, PROJECTS AND POLICY PROFESSIONALS

PLANNING

- The region should integrate existing plans into watershed-level planning.
- Planning officials should continuously update plans to ensure the success of a long-term vision.
- Hazard mitigation planning should be as project specific as possible and not generic on a statewide basis.
- Management on the watershed level should include local and regional experts and authorities.
- The region should integrate individual mitigation plans into master plans to consolidate planning and resources.

PROJECTS

- Projects underway in the region include regional retention, dredging, repetitive loss, gauge enhancement, infrastructure revitalization, and other projects with a high return on investment.
- Future projects in the region should consider downstream impacts, include proper lock control (Teche-Vermilion and Charenton), incorporate more data to drive decision-making, slow down water entering the watershed and support attainable goals.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- The region has no standardized policies, causing challenges with enforcement and compliance, as well as a lack of state-level policies (e.g., BFE +1 or other standards) to guide local compliance.
- Some areas lack technical expertise to inform policy development consistent with best practices at the local level.
- Alternatives to the current policy environment include considerations such as zero net runoff, floodways, monthly stormwater fees and regional detention and retention strategies applied on a statewide level.