

MINUTES
Region 1
REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, August 11, 2020

The Region 1 Regional Steering Committee (RSC) Meeting was held at the Natchitoches City Council Chamber at 10:00 a.m., on Tuesday, August 11, 2020, pursuant to notice duly mailed.

Welcome

- Call to Order:
 - The Meeting was called to order by Chairman Matt Johns at 10:07 a.m., who welcomed the attendees who were in person and on the virtual Zoom call.

- Roll Call
 - At the request of Chairman Johns, Ms. Robin Ramagos, CDC, called the roll of members present in person and on Zoom.
 - Steering Committee Members present in person were: Chairman, Matt Johns (Rapides Parish); Vice-Chairman, Butch Ford (Bossier Parish); and Mr. Rick Nowlin (Natchitoches Parish).
 - Steering Committee Members present on Zoom were: Mr. Ali Mustapha (Caddo Parish), Mr. Steve Brown (DeSoto Parish), and Mr. Morgan Briggs (Grant Parish). Mr. John Michael Moore (Member at Large) joined the meeting on Zoom at 10:40 a.m.
 - Not Present: Mr. Rodney Warren (Bienville Parish), Mr. Dennis Butcher (Claiborne Parish), Mr. Nick Cox (Webster Parish), Mr. Shane Hubbard (Red River Parish), Mr. William Ruffin (Sabine Parish), Mr. Mike Carpenter (Winn Parish), Ms. Lindsey Gouedy (Member at Large), and Ms. Zazell Dudley (Member at Large).
 - Others in attendance, present in person were: Mr. John Richmond, Mr. Jack Skaggs, Mr. Austin Vaughn, Ms. Heidi Stewart, Ms. Jenae Arceneaux, Ms. Randel Elliott, and Ms. Robin Ramagos.
 - Others in attendance, present on Zoom were: Mr. Tom Fontcuberta, Mr. Ben Wicker, Ms. Makida Zackery, Ms. Alexandra Carter, Ms. Lisa Frazier, Mr. Kent Rogers, Mr. Ian Trahan, Ms. Sarada Kalikivaya, Mr. Mike DePue, Mr. Ben Rauschenbach, Matthew Redman, Dori Turner, and Mr. Feico Kempff
 - A quorum was not present.

- Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance
 - Mr. Rick Nowlin led the invocation.
 - Vice Chairman, Butch Ford led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approve and Adopt the Minutes from the June 9, 2020 Meeting and the July 25, 2020 Meeting

- Chairman Johns stated that due to not having a quorum the Committee would bypass the adoption of minutes and at the next meeting, there would be three separate committee minutes to be adopted.

Presentation by the Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD)

- Chairman Johns introduced Mr. Ian Trahan with the DOTD.

- Mr. Trahan stated that he served as the Manager of Task with an oversight of Louisiana Watershed Initiative's (LWI) statewide modeling program.
- Mr. Trahan also stated he served on the LWI's working group and served as a member of the LWI's Technical and Quality Team.
- Mr. Trahan expressed that as the program moved forward, communication between DOTD, RSC, and the H&H modeling groups was the most important aspect when it came to data exchange, program details, flood-related concerns and issues, and sharing of contacts of municipalities within the Regions.
- Mr. Trahan explained that there were seven LWI modeling regions, overlaid onto the eight provisional watershed boundaries, but the watershed boundaries and the LWI modeling regions did not exactly match because water did not always follow boundary lines.
- Mr. Trahan mentioned that the DOTD selected the best engineering teams for each of the seven regions by looking at different aspects of each team such as expertise in H&H modeling, technical expertise, knowledge of the region, ability to engage with the stakeholders and other entities in the region, ability to gain the public's trust, and experience in bathymetric surveying.
- Mr. Trahan mentioned that Atkins North America and their team was selected as the engineering consultant for Region 1.
- Mr. Trahan thanked the Region 1 RSC for letting him speak and explain the DOTD's process in selecting the engineering consultant for Region 1.
- Mr. Trahan introduced Atkins.

Presentation by Atkins

- Mr. Mike DePue explained that he was the Project Manager and was responsible for making sure the projects met all the criteria, that all of the stakeholders were pleased.
- Mr. DePue introduced the rest of his team; Principle-In-Charge, Mr. Luke LaBas; Deputy Project Manager/ Hydraulic Team Leader, Sarada Kalikivaya; Hydrologic Team Leader, Brett Sachtleben; and local liaison in Baton Rouge, Mr. Chris Allen.
- Mr. DePue mentioned that Atkins had a large team of people available to be put on various projects, depending on how many different projects there were.
- Ms. Kalikivaya explained that in Atkins's modeling approach, they wanted to highlight the fact that Region 1 crossed Louisiana's borders into Texas and Arkansas, along with the amount of water that entered Louisiana from those two neighboring states.
- Ms. Kalikivaya mentioned that Atkins had pretty good rain gage data that was available to measure this amount.
- Ms. Kalikivaya explained that projects would be split into multiple Hydrologic Unit Codes (HUC8s) to be able to work the multiple watersheds concurrently.
- Ms. Kalikivaya stated that Region 1 had 11 HUC8s, and those HUC8s would be split between Atkins and their subcontractors, F&N Associates and Michael Baker International.
- Ms. Kalikivaya explained that at the same time Atkins was also looking at how many miles of rivers and streams were previously studied by FEMA and others, and so far, Atkins had found that 1,300 miles had not ever been studied.
- Ms. Kalikivaya stated that Atkins also looked at the gaps in current Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA) and 40% of Region 1 was in a SFHA and subject to potential flooding.
- Ms. Kalikivaya mentioned that from the data collected from the 2016 March and August floods, 3,739 homes were impacted in Region 1. She went on and explained that only 39% of these

homes impacted were in a SFHA and 61% of these structures impacted were not listed in a SFHA.

- Ms. Kalikivaya mentioned the data showed there was a great need to study and understand the flood risks in that area that previously had not been identified.
- Ms. Kalikivaya stated that one of the main things that Atkins wanted to focus on was collaboration between partners and the RSC, especially when it came to data collection, modeling, mapping, and outreach.
- Ms. Kalikivaya explained that there were many stakeholders in Region 1, including Texas, Arkansas, LA Watershed Council, RSC members, Regional Watershed Coalition, FEMA, Community Advocates, Parish Leaders, Police Jurors, and Levee Districts.
- Ms. Kalikivaya stated Atkins wanted to make sure that all of the stakeholders were included in every aspect of those projects.
- Ms. Kalikivaya asked if there were any questions.
- Chairman Johns asked how granular Atkins planned to be with data input and if they were going to go all the way down to culvert sizing and clearance compacity?
- Ms. Kalikivaya explained that she did not have an answer at that time, but Atkins was currently working with DOTD on this type of analysis and would be able to answer that question soon.
- Chairman Johns explained that he was from Rapids Parish and that his parish fell under four watershed regions. He asked how the models were going to interact with other regions since so many different hands were touching one region?
- Mr. Trahan explained that the DOTD and all of the consultants would have monthly coordination meetings to discuss data collected and any overflows between regions.
- Mr. Nowlin stated that he noticed Cane River Lake, in Natchitoches Parish, was not listed when discussing the HUC8s, and for centuries it had been the west branch of the Red River in Natchitoches Parish. He went on to explain that the lake was about 32 miles long and an important part of the City of Natchitoches's flood control system and to the projects submitted for Natchitoches.
- Mr. Nowlin mentioned that the Cane River Lake was dammed on the northern end and a spillway dam was on the southern end.
- Mr. Nowlin asked if there were some criteria for which Cane River Lake was eliminated and not considered a separate watershed entity?
- Mr. Trahan asked Mr. Nowlin if he knew which of the HUC8s listed, Cane River Lake might have been within?
- Mr. Nowlin stated that he did not see any direct connections between Cane River Lake and any of the HUC8s listed.
- Ms. Stewart mentioned that the HUC8s were zoomed out so she was sure the lake fell within one of those basins but was not sure which one it would be.
- Ms. Kalikivaya explained that the 11 HUC8s listed at that time were the only HUC8s that covered Region 1.
- Mr. DePue explained that even though Atkins was modeling on the HUC8s scale, the basins may have been delineated down to the HUC14s or even the catchment scale, so if this lake had its own watershed associated with it and boundaries with flood control, it will have its own basin associated with that portion of the model.
- Chairman Johns asked if there were any other questions and there were none.

Review Flood Risk Presentation

- Mr. Wicker thanked everyone who participated in the flood risk presentation at the last meeting and expressed that his office had received a good bit of information from the Region 1 RSC members and members of the public.
- Mr. Wicker stated that he shared all of the information received with his technical team and they added it to the flood risk presentation and summary.
- Mr. Wicker explained that the summary was going to be broken down into two sections; first, emphasizing the flood risk feedback received during and after the presentation, and second, establishing the root causes and identifying potential flood risk concerns.
- Mr. Wicker mentioned that this summary was in preparation for the governance exercise and in the coming week his office would have more information on that exercise as well as some deadline changes.
- Mr. Wicker stated that the governance exercise would be reviewed at the next RSC meeting on September 8th.
- Chairman Johns asked Mr. Wicker to give a quick, high-level rundown on what information had been received.
- Mr. Wicker explained that on the maps received, great attention was paid to the Natchitoches area and the Bossier Parish area along the Red River.
- Mr. Wicker mentioned that there was a great deal of concern expressed for a need of watershed-based governance and floodplain management, as well as issues concerning inadequate funding for infrastructure and inadequate data collection.
- Mr. Wicker explained that everything would be outlined in the flood risk summary which would be shared with the RSC members soon.
- Chairman Johns asked if there were any other questions for Mr. Wicker and there were none.

Discussion of Project Inventory Tool

- Mrs. Stewart explained that the Project Inventory was a living document that would continue to be updated as projects or plans were conceived and it was meant to be a comprehensive list that would assist the RSC in compiling a complete picture of all projects that were thought about or underway, as well as helping with the development of future watershed coalitions and/or watershed plans.
- Mrs. Stewart mentioned that the RSC would be adopting a preliminary project list and submitting that list to the Office of Community Development (OCD) by October 31, 2020.
- Mrs. Stewart explained that the differences between the Round 1 Project List and the Project Inventory List were that Round 1 had specific requirement criteria and the Project Inventory List did not and was meant to list any and all watershed projects and plans, even those submitted for Round 1 funding.
- Mrs. Stewart explained that anyone could submit a project.
- Mrs. Stewart expressed that the Project Inventory List was not associated with any funding source and was not a grant submission, it was merely to have a complete list and help form regional priorities and find additional funding.
- Mrs. Stewart stated that ideally some of the projects on the Project Inventory List would receive funding from Round 1 and then the other would receive funding from Round 2 or Round 3.

- Chairman Johns asked how “real” did projects need to be if there was not any funding associated to it? Did it need to be something that had some type of study already or could anyone from any entity submit a project?
- Mrs. Stewart answered at that point all projects, from anyone at any entity was to be added. She went on to state that if someone had an idea on how to fix a problem then it needed to be added because it would possibly help.
- Mrs. Stewart mentioned that a link to the Project Inventory List had been sent out and would be sent out again, along with very detailed instructions.
- Mrs. Stewart mentioned that there was a map section where the person submitting the project could draw or enter the project address to map out the exact shape of the project.
- Mr. Stewart also mentioned that any projects associated with watershed and completed in the past two years should also be submitted.
- Mrs. Stewart mentioned that the entire Region 1 was in the LA Mid, but the entire Region 1 was not in the HUD Mid.
- Mrs. Stewart also explained there was another link that was sent out and it was for the Project Inventory Viewer and it should include any projects submitted during Round 1 and those were shown on the viewer by the dots.
- Mrs. Stewart mentioned that all the information associated with a project would show when the dot was selected.
- Mrs. Stewart and Mr. Wicker both emphasized that if there was a project that had been submitted but was not shown to let one of them know and it would be fixed immediately.
- Chairman Johns stated that if anyone was hesitant about submitting a project, they should not be because it was an extremely simple process.
- Chairman Johns asked if there were any questions and there were none.

Discussion of Regional Steering Committee Feedback Survey

- Ms. Ramagos stated that Mrs. Stewart had sent out a survey to all of the RSC members through Survey Monkey and the survey was for them to get an idea on how The Coordinating & Development Corporation (CDC) could better serve the RSC and to see if there was anything that any of the RSC members needed from The CDC.
- Ms. Ramagos mentioned that it was also a way for the RSC members to let The CDC know what the best way to contact everyone was, to continue to build the relationship with each member.
- Chairman Johns asked what the amount of feedback from the survey was so far.
- Mrs. Stewart answered that there was no feedback so far.
- Chairman Johns asked if there were any questions about the survey and there were none.

Closeout: Questions and Public Comments


- Chairman Johns asked if there were any questions or public comments online.
- Mrs. Randel Elliott stated that Mr. Trahan from DOTD thanked everyone for letting him speak and looked forward to working together, and if anyone had any questions, concerns, or flood-related information to please contact him.
- Ms. Ramagos stated that if anyone had not yet sent in the mapping exercise to go ahead and send that in.
- Chairman Johns asked if there were any more questions or public comments online or in the room, and there were none.

Adjourn: Next Steering Committee Meeting: September 8, 2020

- Chairman Johns asked if there was any further business to come before the Committee, and with there being none, the August 11, 2020 meeting was adjourned at 10:46 p.m.

CERTIFICATE

The undersigned, Secretary to the Corporation, certifies that the above and foregoing are the true and correct minutes of the meeting of the Members of the Region 1 Regional Steering Committee held on August 11, 2020, at 10:00 a.m.



Jack "Bump" Skaggs, Secretary