

**LOUISIANA WATERSHED INITIATIVE**  
**REGION 4 REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**REGULAR MEETING**

October 13, 2021

1:30 PM

**MINUTES**

**1. Call to Order**

Mr. Alberto Galan called the meeting to order 1:38 pm

**2. Roll Call**

Members Present: Mr. Alberto Galan, Mr. Matt Johns, Ms. Kara Bonsall, Mr. Gardner Rose, Mr. Tom Fontcuberta, Mr. Michael McCormic, Mr. Myles Hebert

Not Present: Mr. Jacob Marceaux, Mr. Jason Hebert, Mr. Carl Thompson

Others Present: Ms. Jennifer Cobian (Calcasieu Parish), Mr. Mike Hollier (IMCAL), Ms. Natasha Willis (Calcasieu Parish), Ms. Nicolette Jones (LA OCD), Mr. Bradley Spiegel (LA OCD), Ms. Stephanie Boh (LWI Watershed Coordinator), Mr. Edward Anthony (LWI Watershed Coordinator), Ms. Tara Ross (CPPJ), Ms. Kelli VanNorman, Ms. Alyce Therist, Ms. Anita Tillman, Ms. Allison Haertling (UNO-CHART), Ehab Meselje, Emad Habib

**3. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Matt Johns led the Invocation.

Mr. Matt Johns led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**4. Meeting Minutes Approval**

Take appropriate action to approve the minutes of July 28, 2021, Regional 4 Region Steering Committee meeting.

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Myles Hebert and seconded by Mr. Matt Johns, and the motion result was Passed.

**5. Consideration of updates to the LWI R4 RSC Meeting Schedule – QES**

RSC members discussed moving the meeting schedule earlier in the month for November (11/10) and December (12/8) (second Wednesday of the month instead of the 3rd) to accommodate the holidays.

Motion by Matt Johns to amend the schedule; seconded Kara Bonsall

**6. Update on the Model Use Storage & Maintenance Plan (MUSM) – OCD/QES**

QES presented technical review notes on Statewide Data and Modeling Program. Robert Leslie commented on key overarching elements in the plan to be monitored. The comments were well received by Ehab Meselje and Emad Habib. The full technical review document of the Statewide Data And Modeling Program – Comments and Consideration for Region 4 is included in the minutes.

Ehab Meselje and Emad Habib discussed the phased approach in preparing the MUSM Plan. This effort will provide a prototype to be developed with strong input from stakeholders. The public comment period on the Model Use Storage and Maintenance Plan is open through October 28, 2021. Comments can be submitted here:

<https://www.watershed.la.gov/modeling-program>

**7. Receive any additional updates from OCD**

Brad Spiegel noted that an eblast went out a couple of weeks ago announcing the launch of nature-based solutions series webinar – Wednesday, Oct 20 at 1:00 PM. This will be the first of 9 webinars featured. All will be on the LWI website to help understand the development and design of nature-based solution projects.

**8. Receive any additional updates from IMCAL**

No additional updates

**9. Update on LWI statewide modeling effort - Fenstermaker**

No update

**10. General discussion or update from each parish and tribe, if any, regarding this initiative and project, infrastructure, modeling, or other identified needs that exist within each Parish to begin goal and priority setting for Region 4.**

Allen Parish – Not update

Beauregard Parish – No update

Calcasieu Parish – No update  
Cameron Parish – No update  
Coushatta Tribe – No update  
DeSoto Parish – No update  
Jeff Davis Parish – No update  
Rapides Parish – No update  
Sabine Parish – No update  
Vernon Parish – No update  
Public Comment – No comments

## **11. Adjournment.**

Mr. Matt Johns motioned, and Mr. Tom Fontcuberta seconded to adjourn the meeting at 2:34 PM



# STATEWIDE DATA AND MODELING PROGRAM

## COMMENTS AND CONSIDERATION FOR REGION 4

### SUMMARY

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The state is working with subject matter experts, federal partners, academic institutions, and local stakeholders to create models of Louisiana’s watersheds. These models will simulate flood scenarios and analyze potential flood mitigation solutions. This modeling effort will support regional collaboration around shared water management challenges and will build an objective, science-based understanding of how projects, policies, and other measures can work together to reduce flood risk.

Two Louisiana agencies coordinated the development of *Guidance on Modeling Methodology in Support of the Louisiana Watershed Initiative Watershed Models*, dated June 29, 2021. This guidance was developed in collaboration with modeling consultants to establish consistency among models, require that model designs include proper attributes, inform scope development, and set expectations regarding desired features and quality control. The following link will provide online access to the guidance document:

[https://watershed.la.gov/assets/docs/LWI\\_Guidance\\_on\\_Modeling\\_Methodology-2021-06-29.pdf](https://watershed.la.gov/assets/docs/LWI_Guidance_on_Modeling_Methodology-2021-06-29.pdf)

During development watershed in accordance with the guidance described above, the draft *LWI Model Use, Storage, and Maintenance Plan* (MUSM plan) will provide a necessary framework to support long-term management of watershed models statewide, with proposed recommendations for model use and storage by state, regional, and local agencies. The following link will provide online access to Part I of the August 16, 2021, draft MUSM Plan.

[https://watershed.la.gov/assets/docs/LWI\\_ModelUseStorageAndMaintenancePlan-2021-08-16-DRAFT.pdf](https://watershed.la.gov/assets/docs/LWI_ModelUseStorageAndMaintenancePlan-2021-08-16-DRAFT.pdf)

The state is accepting public comments on the draft MUSM Plan until October 25, 2021. The review comments documented herein were prepared on behalf of the LWI Region 4 Steering Committee by Quality Engineering & Surveying, LLC.



## INITIAL REVIEW COMMENTS

The LWI Region 4 Steering Committee requested review comments to the draft MUSM Plan from technical matter experts and other consultants. The following review comments of both the June 2021 guidance document and the August 2021 draft MUSM Plan were prepared by Quality Engineering & Surveying, LLC, on behalf of the LWI Region 4 Steering Committee.

## COMMENTS TO GUIDANCE ON MODELING METHODOLOGY

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<b>Table of Contents:</b>	Appendix A is listed, but no appendix is provided with the document.
<b>Page 13:</b>	Section 3 Relation to FEMA Modeling Standards Summary information in outlined box is partially cut off and unreadable.
<b>Page 14:</b>	A specific default standard should be identified for a standardized naming convention of model components.
<b>Page 16:</b>	Section 5.1.1 recommended use of <i>HEC-RAS v6.0.0</i> modeling software should be revised to address the compatibility of flow models with future version upgrades of <i>HEC-RAS</i> software.

## REGION 4 CONSIDERATION: COMMENTS TO DRAFT MUSM

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The Watershed Coordinators have provided a technical review that considers the Governance Recommendation and the transition of the Regional Steering Committee (RSC) to the LWI Region 4 – Coalition. This review serves as a reference for the RSC and can be used as a guide for comments to the state, for identification of potential gaps, and for the overall influence of the design and function of the future Coalition.

## KEY OVERARCHING COMMENTS

### Compatibility and Scale

- Consideration should be given to the application of a huge model to the micro-scale.
- Define the size limits and criteria for projects required to be submitted.
  - What is the minimum project size required to adhere to this process?
- Ensure that models can be updated to preserve functionality with versions following *HEC-RAS v6.0*, with procedures to avoid lag time/compatibility issues in model submittals, updates, or downloads.
- Identify end-user system requirements to ensure optimum performance.
- Consider the number of staff/modelers allocated to each region and the availability of qualified modeling professionals to actually perform the modeling work for that region.



- Consider the technical/hardware/software requirements of the model with respect to the availability of local consultants and their associated resources.

### **Authorities, Procedures, & Timelines**

- Provide workflow iterations that define a timeframe from submittal to approvals for various model scales.
  - Determine if an expedited review is allowable/establish requirements if necessary
- Define model refresh rate and frequency requirements.
- Define the process of coordination for impacts where multiple projects are in close enough proximity, or of significant scale, such that potential for overlapping effects become significant.
  - Example: In the event that projects are submitted in a close window, define the procedure.
- Can a local entity require a project to be reviewed through the process?
- In the instance of conflicting model results or of a challenge to model accuracy, appropriate criteria, guidelines, and processes should be defined to identify which model supersedes.
- What happens when the model identifies floodways/floodplains that are not recognized by federal bodies?
- Define procedures to confirm and document what was actually built.
- Define procedures for updating and maintaining model logs and model update logs.
- As-built confirmation of what was built and who is responsible
  - Identify who pays for or performs field verifications and who audits the as-built reviews.
- What is the level of liability to consultants, in the event that a downloaded model does not meet applicable quality criteria?

## **REGIONAL COMMENTS**

(For use during meeting/notes)