

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

April 28, 2021

1:30 PM

**MINUTES**

**1. Call to Order**

Mr. Alberto Galan called the meeting to order 1:31 pm

**2. Roll Call**

Members Present: Mr. Alberto Galan, Mr. Matt Johns, Mr. Jacob Marceaux, Mr. Jason Hebert, Ms. Kara Bonsall (via Zoom), Mr. Myles Hebert, Mr. Thomas Fontcuberta (via Zoom), Mr. Carl Thompson (via Zoom)

Not Present: Mr. William Ruffin, Mr. Bill Sabine, Jefferson Davis Parish

Others Present: Mr. Mike Hollier (IMCAL), Ms. Jennifer Cobian (Calcasieu Parish), Mr. Terry Frelot (Calcasieu Parish), Ms. Natasha Willis (Calcasieu Parish), Mr. Bradley Spiegel (LA OCD), Ms. Nicolette Jones (LA OCD), Ms. Stephanie Boh (LWI Watershed Coordinator), Mr. Edward Anthony (LWI Watershed Coordinator), Ms. Kelli Van Norman (City of Lake Charles), Ms. Allison Haertling (UNO-CHART)

**3. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Jacob Marceaux led the Invocation.

Mr. Jacob Marceaux led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**4. Meeting Minutes Approval**

Take appropriate action to approve the minutes of March 24, 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. Update on the 2021-2022 Regional Communications Plan, QES/OCD

### LWI Region 4 – Website & Parish Support Survey, QES

Watershed Coordinators gave updates on the LWI R4 website, detailing layout, and the site's ability to serve as a central reference point. A Parish Support survey is included on the website and serves as a project tool to support Outreach & Engagement activities, determine Parish needs, and build a contact database of those persons interested in LWI.

### 2021-2022 Regional Communications Plan, QES:

The RSC received updates on the Regional Communication Plan, and updated the strategy to inform and obtain feedback from stakeholders across the region with a one pager of the Provisional Governance Recommendation. Requested support of RSC meetings in scheduling O&E with respective police juries.

Updated language of one pager in open discussion to the following:

- Modify IMCAL responsibilities
- Change the state worked with to Works with... in about section
- Update Resource page on the website to make it more navigable and easier to find documents.
- RSC members – Update Gardner Rose

### Potential Groups for Outreach:

- Municipal and parish floodplain managers
- Gravity Drainage Districts and Boards
- NFIP/CRS participating communities- NFIP stands for National Flood Insurance Program
- Soil and waters conservation districts- Natural Resource Conservation contacts
- Ag. and Forestry contacts

### Utilizing Henry Consulting Update, QES/OCD:

The potential involvement of Henry Consulting in Outreach and Engagement efforts was discussed and supported. RSC members had no issue utilizing Henry Consulting as much as possible.

## 6. Funding Strategies Presentation – Steve Picou, Adaptation Strategies

- Work and transition to be Flood Ready = Being Fund Ready
- Healthy water = healthy people; Healthy people = healthy economy
- LWI offering opportunity for Louisiana. Who has more water than most, and how to manage the economic asset
  - Treat water as an economic asset. Create new economic and recreational opportunities integrated in water management

- How can we engage the players to impact the Louisiana Water Economy

Identify projects that are replicable at any size

- Example: Applying user fees and associated potential revenue = At Capital Region rate \$25
  - Water is withdrawn at no cost. User fees have the potential to generate between \$30M and \$60M in annual revenue
  - Runoff in Nashville, TN has charges applied and makes \$34M annually to run stormwater division, fund water management
- Carbon market system – can be used to stop acid rain
- Property Sale Tax – Hard discussion needed in Louisiana, actually has 4<sup>th</sup> lowest rates
- Fort Polk – considering getting on board with water/flood management as well Transportation agencies
  - Fort Polk – housing marketing and some watershed opportunities – Nate- on military bases; water quality issues will be addressed; budget is in excess of \$700 billion per year. Work with them on water management
  - DOTD – as an infrastructure partner; to design project assistance; to move water in a natural way, to preserve and create opportunities to monitor the water.
- Per Steve Picou, Calcasieu has the most restorable watersheds in the state because the upper reaches become woodsy "weave nature into your project"
- Jacob Marceaux – Questions about the funding paper on the topic– located on Regional Website and will be on LWI website. Have they worked with Water & Conservation – no but we do know each other.
- Jason Hebert – our area has poor infrastructure and low tax revenue, clarify the charging for water. It would be a couple \$ a month for water extraction; stormwater fee. Equitable tool that can be used with incentives
- Conclusion:
  - Ensure that all water players are at the table when discussing the water future.
  - Several funding strategies to consider see PPT and document on website

**7. LWI Region 4 – Projects Program Timeline & Project Selection Criteria, QES/OCD**

The purpose of the exercise was to recap the Round 1 project selection timeline and activities, clarify the state scoring criteria, and discuss LWI regional processes necessary in place to fairly select a project for LWI R4. As a point of reference, there was a recap of March 24, 2021 which was part one of the Project Selection discussion. Reviewed the options for project selection criteria and priorities discussed in detail by the RSC members.

Highlights of Project Selection Discussion

- Jacob – Formerly proposed an approach to divide \$5M by area (each parish) and let them complete a projects within that budget

- Matt – Explained each parish may not have a project on the list, potentially moving forward #1 Option with caveat, equitable distribution
- Jacob – Feels being voluntold throughout the process
- Matt – We can say we want to spend it equitably
  - Myles – Consider what's best for the area, the region
  - Jacob - \$550k is more important to smaller areas
- Alberto – I would rather to a larger project in the North that holds water than a project in Calcasieu that effects only a smaller area
- Matt – We want to maximize the use of funds and also try to be equitable distribution
- Nicolette – Be more specific – further define geographical distribution
- Jennifer – If you did not submit a full application you are off the table
- Matt - Motion that we use State’s scoring with 2 caveats: Equitable geographic distribution as consideration and maximizing use of \$5M
- Jason Hebert – 2nd

Project Selection Criteria - Methodology:

Picking the highest rank projects by the state

1. Consideration of maximizing the use of all five million
2. With consideration for equitable geographic distribution

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

In closing:

- Watershed Coordinators prompted RSC members to freely share the website, survey, and project selection criteria with stakeholders

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

- Timeline end of May for having projects ranked by state
- Jacob – Surprise projects – How were they selected?
- Brad - Separate program in the Action Plan
- Jacob – Can you convey that we’d like some heads up or involvement to meet overall goal.
- Jennifer - Everyone was surprised even some LWI personnel, but it was presented as LWI and we want more communication in the future
- Nicolette – HUD gave State of LA 1.2B in response to March 2016 flood, unprecedented. Recommends reviewing the Action Plan

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

Michael Hollier from IMCAL gave updates on IMCAL's developing potential and provided helpful feedback for establishing project selection criteria in the comment period.

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

No update

**11. 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

**12. Adjournment.**

Mr. Jacob Marceaux motioned, and Mr. Alberto Galan seconded to adjourn the meeting at 3:12 PM