Priority & Commitment To Plan Evaluation

Bucket 2 – Council Selected Restoration Component

PROPOSAL TITLE

Golden Triangle Marsh Creation

PROPORAL NUMBER

LA-2

LOCATION

Orleans and St. Bernard Parishes, Southeastern Louisiana

SPONSOR(S)

Louisiana

TYPE OF FUNDING REQUESTED (Planning, Technical Assistance, Implementation)

Planning

REVIEWED BY:

Alyssa Dausman

DATE:

02/14/2015

A. Comprehensive Plan Goals

Of the goals addressed by the proposal, which is the single primary goal?
Proposals should discuss how the proposed activity is designed to address the primary goal.
Check one:

- (●) Restore and Conserve Habitat – Restore and conserve the health, diversity and resilience of key coastal, estuarine and marine habitats.
- ( ) Restore Water Quality – Restore and protect water quality of the Gulf Coast region's fresh, estuarine and marine waters.
- ( ) Replenish and Protect Living Coastal and Marine Resources – Restore and protect healthy, diverse and sustainable living coastal and marine resources.
- ( ) Enhance Community Resilience – Build upon and sustain communities with capacity to adapt to short- and long-term changes.
- ( ) Restore and Revitalize the Gulf Economy – Enhance the sustainability and resiliency of the Gulf economy.

Notes:

As indicated in the proposal, the Golden Triangle Marsh Creation project's objective is to restore and protect wetland, fish, and wildlife habitat and help maintain landscape integrity and enhance community resilience. The Golden Triangle is a narrow band of brackish marsh directly east of New Orleans between Lake Borgne and the confluence of the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. The Inner Harbor Navigation Canal – Lake Borgne Surge Barrier stretches across the Golden Triangle Marsh, so these wetlands are a natural buffer in the multiple lines of defense protecting geographically and socially vulnerable communities in the city of New Orleans from storm surge. In

B. Comprehensive Plan Objectives

Proposals must clearly identify which objectives the proposal will address

1. Restore, Enhance, and Protect Habitats

(●) YES ( ) NO ( ) Not articulated ( ) N/A

2. Restore, Improve, and Protect Water Resources

(●) YES ( ) NO ( ) Not articulated ( ) N/A

3. Protect and Restore Living Coastal and Marine Resources

(●) YES ( ) NO ( ) Not articulated ( ) N/A

4. Restore and Enhance Natural Processes and Shorelines

(●) YES ( ) NO ( ) Not articulated ( ) N/A

Notes:

As indicated in the proposal, the Golden Triangle is a narrow band of brackish marsh directly east of New Orleans between Lake Borgne and the confluence of the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. The Inner Harbor Navigation Canal – Lake Borgne Surge Barrier stretches across the Golden Triangle Marsh, so these wetlands are a natural buffer in the multiple lines of defense protecting geographically and socially vulnerable communities in the city of New Orleans from storm surge. In addition, the Golden Triangle Marsh falls within the acquisition boundary of the Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge, one of the last remaining marsh areas adjacent to Lakes Pontchartrain and Borgne (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2009). It is the largest urban National Wildlife Refuge, as

8. Of these objectives which is the single primary objective the proposal addresses?

Check one:

- (●) Restore, Enhance, and Protect Habitats
- ( ) Restore, Improve, and Protect Water Resources
- ( ) Protect and Restore Living Coastal and Marine Resources
- ( ) Restore and Enhance Natural Processes and Shorelines
- ( ) Promote Community Resilience
- ( ) Promote Natural Resource Stewardship and Environmental Education
- ( ) Improve Science-Based Decision-Making Processes

C. RESTORE Act and Comprehensive Plan Priority Criteria

All proposals must explain if the proposal addresses one or more of the priority criteria as established by the RESTORE Act and Initial Comprehensive Plan and, if so, how.

1. This project is projected to make the greatest contribution to restoring and protecting the natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches, and coastal wetlands of the Gulf Coast region, without regard to geographic location within the Gulf Coast region.

(●) YES ( ) NO ( ) Not articulated ( ) N/A

2. This is a large-scale project/program that is projected to substantially contribute to restoring and protecting the natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches, and coastal wetlands of the Gulf Coast ecosystem.

(●) YES ( ) NO ( ) Not articulated ( ) N/A

3. This project is contained in existing Gulf Coast State comprehensive plans for the restoration and protection of natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches, and coastal wetlands of the Gulf Coast region.

(●) YES ( ) NO

4. This project will restore long-term resiliency of the natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches, and coastal wetlands most impacted by the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill.

(●) YES ( ) NO

5. Promote Community Resilience

(●) YES ( ) NO ( ) Not articulated ( ) N/A

6. Promote Natural Resource Stewardship and Environmental Education

(●) YES ( ) NO ( ) Not articulated ( ) N/A

Notes:

As discussed on page 2 of the proposal, the Golden Triangle Marsh Creation project's objective is to restore and protect wetland, fish, and wildlife habitat and help maintain landscape integrity and enhance community resilience. As detailed on page 15 of the proposal, the Golden Triangle Marsh Creation project will directly create approximately 600 acres of marsh near the western side of Lake Borgne, where there is currently little marsh acreage between the lake and the Greater New Orleans Metropolitan Area. Because wetlands can help reduce the effects of storm surge and wave action, restoration of marsh in the Golden Triangle area can protect nearby levee systems and ultimately local communities. In particular, the Golden Triangle Marsh Creation project is immediately adjacent to the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal-Lake

D. Comprehensive Plan Commitments

All proposals must demonstrate how the proposal will achieve any or all of the commitments in the Comprehensive Plan. The commitments in the Comprehensive Plan are as follows:

Does the proposal articulate how it will achieve the following commitments in the comprehensive plan?

1. Science-based Decision-Making

(●) YES ( ) NO ( ) Not articulated

Notes:

As discussed on pages 4-7 of the submission, CPRA is committed to science-based decision making. The science-based decision making process that CPRA used to develop and publish the 2012 Coastal Master Plan includes the Golden Triangle Marsh Creation project. CPRA is able to apply an integrated suite of Predictive Models and Planning Tool, a science- based decision support system developed for the Master Plan, to work towards achieving the RESTORE objectives of habitat protection and restoration.

2. Regional Ecosystem-based Approach to Restoration

(●) YES ( ) NO ( ) Not articulated

Notes:

As outlined on page 2 of the proposal, the Golden Triangle Marsh Creation project's objective is to restore and protect wetland, fish, and wildlife habitat and help maintain landscape integrity and enhance community resilience. The Golden Triangle is a narrow band of brackish marsh directly east of New Orleans between Lake Borgne and the confluence of the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. The Inner Harbor Navigation Canal – Lake Borgne Surge Barrier stretches across the Golden Triangle Marsh, so these wetlands are an important natural buffer in the multiple lines of defense protecting geographically and socially vulnerable communities in the city of New Orleans from

3. Engagement, Inclusion, and Transparency

(●) YES ( ) NO ( ) Not articulated

Notes:

As indicated on pages 13 and 14 of the proposal, CPRA established a strategic outreach and engagement framework for the Coastal Master Plan that helped to guide communications and interactions with diverse audiences throughout the planning process-which includes this currently proposed project.

CPRA's outreach and engagement framework provides a variety of ways for stakeholders and citizens to learn about and participate in the master planning process, including small group gatherings, web offerings, direct communication with

4. Leveraging Resources and Partnerships

◉ YES ◯ NO ◯ Not articulated

Notes:

As indicated on pages 14 and 15 of the submission, CPRA has a variety of resources and partnerships with which it is able to leverage for the benefit of this project. For example, the System-Wide Assessment and Monitoring Program (SWAMP) will bring the previously described CRMS, BICM, and LASARD monitoring and assessment programs together into one framework in an effort to avoid duplication, improve efficiency, and provide the data needed to perform programmatic performance assessments.

Golden Triangle has the advantage of being located in the Lake Borgne area where several restoration projects create a comprehensive, system-wide approach to effectively restore, enhance, and protect the area. Much of the success of the

5. Delivering Results and Measuring Impacts

◉ YES ◯ NO

Notes:

As discussed on page 11 of the proposal, measures of success for the Golden Triangle Marsh Creation project include wetlands and wildlife habitat restoration, as well as increased environmental education and outreach for the public in nearby New Orleans. At the project-scale, performance measures will track the progress towards meeting management goals and objectives. CPRA is currently working with the Water Institute of the Gulf to more fully develop a System-wide Assessment and Monitoring Program (SWAMP) that will bring existing monitoring and assessment programs under one comprehensive umbrella in an effort to avoid duplication and improve efficiency.

E. Meeting Commitments and Tracking and Measuring Progress

1. Does the proposal articulate how it will meet and achieve its commitments?

◉ YES ◯ NO ◯ Not articulated

2. Does the proposal have a plan for tracking and measuring progress?

◉ YES ◯ NO

Notes:

As indicated on pages 2 and 11 of the proposal submission, measures of success for the Golden Triangle Marsh Creation project include wetlands and wildlife habitat restoration, as well as increased environmental education and outreach for the public in nearby New Orleans. At the project-scale, performance measures will track the progress towards meeting management goals and objectives.

Please see additional notes in Section D.

F. Proposal Emphasis Areas

Does the submission describe how the proposed project or program addresses the following four considerations:

1. Is the proposed activity **foundational** in the sense that the project or program forms an initial core step (or steps) in addressing a significant ecosystem issue, and can future activities be tiered to substantially increase the benefits?

(●) YES ( ) NO ( ) Not articulated

Notes:

Pages 8 and 9 of the proposal outline how the project's partnerships not only make the project foundational in nature, but also allow for the activity to be sustainable over time. As discussed on page 9 of the proposal, the Golden Triangle Marsh Creation was one of the projects identified as a priority project, or one recommended for the 1st implementation period (2012-2031) in the Louisiana Master Plan (CPRA 2012). The Golden Triangle Marsh Creation project proposed here will substantially contribute to the overall effort to restore the entire Golden Triangle area identified for restoration in the Master Plan. Likewise, future Master Plan activities will increase the benefits of this proposed project.

2. Will the proposed activity be **sustainable** over time?

(●) YES ( ) NO ( ) Not articulated

Notes:

Pages 8 and 9 of the proposal outline how the project's partnerships not only make the project foundational in nature, but also allow for the activity to be sustainable over time. The Golden Triangle Marsh Creation project would help restore and protect wetlands and fish and wildlife habitat and would help maintain landscape integrity and enhance community resilience. Golden Triangle Marsh Creation was one of the projects identified as a priority project, or one recommended for the 1st implementation period (2012-2031) in the Louisiana Master Plan (CPRA 2012). The Golden Triangle Marsh Creation project proposed here will substantially contribute to the overall effort to restore the entire Golden Triangle area

3. Is the proposed activity **likely to succeed**?

(●) YES ( ) NO ( ) Not articulated

Notes:

As discussed on pages 14-15 of the proposal, at the project-scale, performance measures will track the progress towards meeting management goals and objectives.

In addition, the predictive modeling and planning tools outlined in pages 5 through 7 lay out the modeling and planning achieved on the front end for the project proposal.

Pages 9-10 of the submission outline the approach to adaptive management. Adaptive management in deltaic

4. Does the proposed activity **benefit** the human **community**?
(examples of benefits may include, but are not limited to: how a project will utilize local workers, how a project will benefit geographically or socially vulnerable communities, how a project will benefit the natural resources critical to natural-resource dependent industries such as fisheries, tourism, etc.)

- (●) YES
- ( ) NO
- ( ) Not articulated

Notes:

As discussed on pages 15 and 16 of the proposal, the Golden Triangle Marsh Creation project will directly create approximately 600 acres of marsh near the western side of Lake Borgne, where there is currently little marsh acreage between the lake and the Greater New Orleans Metropolitan Area. Because wetlands can help reduce the effects of storm surge and wave action, it is critical to restore and maintain marsh in the Golden Triangle area to protect nearby levee systems and ultimately local communities. In particular, the Golden Triangle Marsh Creation project is immediately adjacent to the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal-Lake Borgne Surge Barrier and will help buffer and protect this critically-important protection feature.