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January 21, 2022

NLLD Executive Director Recognizes All involved in Historic Funding for Morganza to the Gulf



Tuesday and Wednesday of this week saw two major puzzle pieces for the construction of the Morganza to the Gulf Hurricane Protection (Morganza) project fall into place, marking two great days for Coastal Louisiana and for Lafourche and Terrebonne Parishes in particular.

First, on Tuesday, there was a ceremony for the **signing of the Project Partnership Agreement (PPA) for Morganza**. The PPA is the final document that must be in place to begin federal construction on a previously authorized project that has received a New Start appropriation. The PPA was signed by the Morganza to the Gulf Project's federal sponsor, Col Murphy at the US Army Corps of Engineers District in New Orleans. It was also signed by the project's two non-

federal co-sponsors - the State of Louisiana through the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority signed by Board Chairman Chip Kline, and the Terrebonne Levee and Conservation District signed by Board President Tony Alford.

Then, on Wednesday, **it was confirmed that the project would receive construction funding in the amount of \$378.5 million from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)**. That is in addition to an initial \$12 million the project received through the New Start designation in January 2021.

These were two fantastic days culminating the tremendous work of many going back to 1992 when the the project first got started. These two days mark the beginning of many needed to reach project's completion. We have many pieces of the puzzle yet to put in place.

When looking at everything that had to be done to get to these two days, the number of people we need to recognize and thank is extraordinary, but I want to point out a few at the risk of missing many:

- The **citizens of Lafourche and Terrebonne** who have voted to tax themselves for flood protection.
- The **Terrebonne, North and South Lafourche Levee Districts** and their past and present Officers and Members of their Boards of Commissioners who never have lost focus on this project and have supported everything it takes to get this project moving.
- Our **local delegation in the LA Legislature** over the years who supported providing state funding year after year to build out portions of this system even before the first federal dollar. We currently have an outstanding bunch of Representatives and Senators who fight for Morganza funding at every turn. Their support has been immeasurable. The funding they secured has been used to provide protection that is now in place. We have already realized the benefits with flooding prevented during numerous storms.
- The **Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA)** under the past leadership of Garret Graves and Jerome Zeringue and under current leadership of Chairman Chip Kline who were and remain stalwarts for the Morganza project. Inside of the CPRA, there are countless professionals who provided technical, legal, programmatic, and other means of support to the advancement of this project.
- The **Governors of Louisiana** in the past and especially our current Governor John Bell Edwards who has made this project a highest priority for his administration.
- Many of our past and all of present **members of Louisiana's federal delegation** in Washington, DC should be celebrating the accomplishments

realized by the arrival of these two days. Congressmen Steve Scalise and Garret Graves, along with their excellent staffs, have spent countless hours helping us navigate through the process of getting this project a federal New Start designation. Having worked directly with them on this project's advancement, I can confidently say that, without their tireless efforts and leadership, we simply would not have a project today. Because of their relationships, we have long enjoyed the support of other Louisiana Representatives, especially Mike Johnson, Ralph Abraham, Cedric Richmond and now Troy Carter. Our past senators John Breaux, David Vitter and Mary Landrieu all were instrumental in keeping this project alive when it could have easily perished, and today, the support and leadership of Senators John Kennedy and Bill Cassidy are obviously bearing fruit.

- That brings us to our partners at the **US Army Corps of Engineers**. A federal project of this magnitude does not get moving without challenges. I can confidently say that our relationship with the Corps at all levels has never been stronger. This includes the District in New Orleans under current command of Colonel Murphy. We have seen several Colonels move through New Orleans who have helped us keep this project moving, but the work of Col Murphy and his predecessor Col Clancy has been pivotal in helping us get this project started. As Colonels come and go, we have been able to count on the civilian side of the Corps to keep our project advancing. The leadership of Mark Wingate and his project staff have been outstanding. The next level up at the Corps is the Division Headquarters in Vicksburg. Major General Rick Kaiser got this project moving again when it seemed hopelessly stalled. Major Generals Toy and Holland have been able to continue to support the new approach that was used to reconsider the cost and implementation of the project. Again, their civilian staff were instrumental in helping us keep this project moving forward. In Washington DC, the project goes through another level of scrutiny requiring the support of so many at Corps HQ. This broadens out to include the Assistant Secretary of the Army and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) as part of the Administration. Lt Gen Semonite and Lt Gen Spellmon have both been able to garner support for our project working with ASA-CW RD James and the OMB to get the project cleared on all levels and funded. Again, within the Corps, there are simply too many people to name who were part of keeping this project moving.

The long list of thank you's and credits barely captures the breadth and scope of what it has taken to get this project from its beginning to today, with federal construction beginning in earnest. Yet, we have a very long way to go. We will need the continued support of everyone on this list and many more in our future to see this project to completion. Still, every bit of this project brings benefits that are realized immediately. It has truly been a milestone week.

Dwayne Bourgeois,
Executive Director

North Lafourche Levee District

Upcoming NLLD Board of Commissioners Meetings:

Tuesday, February 15, 2022

NLLD Office, 3862 LA 1, Raceland

5:15 PM

Finance and Priority Committee

5:30 PM or immediately following Committee Meeting

Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners



Agendas posted on our [website](#) 24 hours before meetings.

[WATCH MEETINGS LIVE](#)

[2022 MEETING SCHEDULE](#)

About the NLLD

The North Lafourche Conservation, Levee, and Drainage District (known as NLLD) was formed in 1992 to provide drainage and flood protection services for the northern portion of Lafourche Parish, including the entire parish north of the Intracoastal Canal. **The District includes over 250 miles of levees and drainage canals, and over 40 pump stations.**



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