

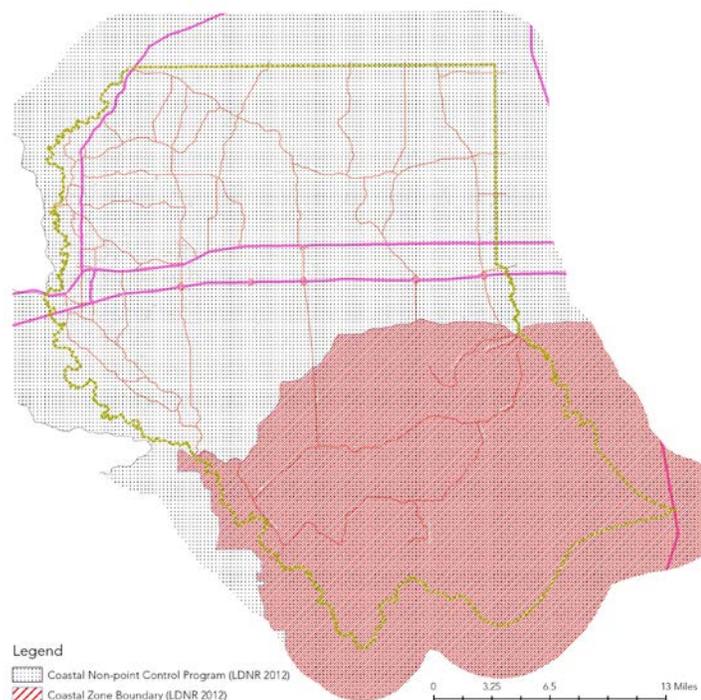
## 9. COASTAL MANAGEMENT

Livingston Parish is not located on the coast, however tidal inundation often reaches the parish and water from the Parish affects the coast. There are a variety of programs related to coastal protection and management that impact the parish are described below<sup>19</sup>.

This chapter provides a ‘snapshot’ of various coastal programs including their purpose, highlights as they apply to the parish, potential impact on the parish (relating to growth and development) and actions the parish should take to influence positive outcomes for the parish (such as a reduction of flooding risk and expedition of permitting).

Several caveats are to be noted:

- These programs change over time (e.g. the coastal zone boundary was redrawn and a significant portion of the parish was withdrawn from the coastal zone in 2012).
- They involve interagency cooperation (Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, etc.) at several levels (local, state and federal).
- Program funding depends on authorization from the federal government. While many are currently unfunded, the CPRA projects that more funding will be available in a few years.
- The actions recommended are intended to increase local control and increase the likelihood that the parish will benefit from these programs.
- The programs include: regulation (i.e. permitting), technical assistance, and construction to restore coastal resources. They also include funding to reduce risk associated with inundation. They primarily focus on the preservation and restoration of wetlands.



*Figure 45: Coastal zone designations.*

<sup>19</sup> The Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA), the enabling legislation for the coastal program, was enacted to protect coastal resources, primarily wetlands. The state of Louisiana’s Department of Natural Resources, is tasked with implementing the coastal resource programs.

Coastal programs that affect Livingston Parish development and address local risk include:

1. Louisiana’s Comprehensive Master Plan for a Sustainable Coast
2. the Coastal Zone Management Program
3. the Coastal Non-point Management Program

## **Louisiana’s Comprehensive Master Plan for a Sustainable Coast**

**Focus:** Coordination, funding and construction.

**Purpose and highlights:** The master plan is intended to increase flood protection, maintain natural processes, coastal habitats, cultural heritage, and elements of economic development along the coast. The plan is science and engineering based with the goal of improving flood protection to coastal communities, building a sustainable ecosystem, and ensuring the economic vitality of the coast through structural and non-structural projects.

**Principles of the plan:**

1. addressing long-term solutions, not stop gap measures
2. take a natural systems approach,
3. establish clear and transparent expectations,
4. acknowledge residual risk of projects,
5. include the public role through a participatory process,
6. account for uncertainties and
7. provide enough flexibility to allow adaptation to changing circumstances.

**Types of projects considered:**

1. **Restoration Projects:** Bank Stabilization, Barrier Island/Headland Restoration, Hydrologic Restoration, Marsh Creation, Oyster Barrier Reefs, Ridge Creation, Sediment Diversion, Channel Realignment, Shoreline Protection.
2. **Structural Projects:** Earthen Levee, Concrete Wall, Floodgate, Pumps.
3. **Nonstructural Projects:** Elevation of structures, Flood proofing, Voluntary Acquisition of Residential Structures.

Two primary factors drove decisions about the projects that should be in the 2012 Coastal Master Plan.

1. How well did the projects reduce flood risk?
2. How well did the projects build new land or sustain the land we already have?

Projects are modeled for their reduction in risk and ranked according to the model output. They are included in the plan at the time, based on their ranking. Projects identified in the interim can be added to the list if their rank is higher than others included in the plan.

**Status and Administration:** Active and administered by the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, the plan was first adopted in 2007, was updated in 2012 and will be updated again in 2017. The process for that update is currently underway.

**Impact on Livingston Parish:** The 2017 Master Plan Update is projected to include funding to reduce the risk of riverine flooding. Projects, especially shovel-ready projects that reduce flooding risk are likely to be considered in the planning process and included in the plan. During the plan update process, the CPRA will solicit participation in the process from parish representatives; they typically request involvement of the Local Coastal Program manager.

The plan also includes funding dedicated to the reduction the impact (property loss) from inundation. This includes flood proofing of individual structures. Funding is currently limited but CPRA projects funding will dramatically increase in next few years.

A project is also planned near the Parish that includes sediment diversion into the Maurepas Swamp in order to o sustain existing bald cypress-tupelo swamp habitat. It is planned in the vicinity of Convent or Hope Canal, but will affect the natural and recreational environment in Livingston Parish.

## **Coastal zone management program**

**Focus:** Permitting of development to protect coastal resources.

**Purpose and highlights:** The coastal zone management program regulates development activity in designated coastal zones. A coastal use permit is required for projects in the coastal zone, including but not limited to: dredge and fill, bulkhead construction, shoreline modification, and other development projects such as marinas, subdivisions, drainage facilities and energy infrastructure.

**Highlights:** A prime objective of the program is to reduce the loss of wetlands and aquatic resources, as well as to reduce conflicts between coastal resource user groups. Essentially anyone that intends to disturb dirt within the coastal zone is required to apply for authorization prior to construction of any project. No net loss of wetlands is allowed. Currently, permits are typically either approved or approved with modifications.

While the programs are administered by the state, local parishes have the opportunity to exert some local control over the permitting process by opting to administer the program locally. There are requirements including the adoption of a local plan<sup>20</sup>. The State offers funding and technical assistance to local programs.

**Impact on Livingston Parish:** At this time, the area of the parish that is in a designated coastal zone (see figure \_\_\_\_\_) is not subject to development pressure. Therefore the permitting process regulatory hurdles do not significantly impact the parish residents or developers. However, for the projects that may occur in the Coastal Zone, an applicant must anticipate the review or risk being rejected or having modifications applied (adding cost to the development process).

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<sup>20</sup> For more information on the development of the local program including program requirements please see the *Local Coastal Programs Handbook*, which can be downloaded from the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, Office of Coastal Management website: [www.dnr.louisiana.gov](http://www.dnr.louisiana.gov)

The other impact on the parish of the Coastal Zone program is the potential cost of administering the program. The parish has the option of local administration or relying on State administration (General Office of Coastal Management).

Local administration has several potential benefits:

1. Can expedite the review process for local applicants. For example, incorporating coastal permitting into the building department would reduce the number of agencies directly involved and increase one-stop shopping for development review.
2. Increases local control over uses of local concern: camps, private docks, bulkheads, cattle walks, landfills, subdivisions, maintenance of most private canals, etc.
3. Increases responsiveness to local concerns, i.e. resource conservation, economic development, etc.
4. A local hub of knowledge about the program.
5. Feedback into state programs – the recent Coast 2050 Initiative process interviewed local coastal program administrators for input into the emerging program.
6. Facilitate communication regarding access to funding for resource management.

## **Coastal Non-point Management Program (CNPMP)**

**Focus:** Primarily permitting to reduce impact to costal resources.

**Purpose:** To provide for the implementation of management measures to protect coastal waters, generally, and to accomplish the following specific goals:

1. Identify land uses which may cause or contribute to degradation of coastal waters;
2. Identify critical coastal areas adjacent to affected coastal waters;
3. Provide for implementation of additional management measures to achieve and maintain water quality standards and designated uses;
4. Provide technical assistance to the public and local governments to implement management measures;
5. Provide for public participation in all aspects of the program;
6. Establish mechanisms to improve coordination among federal, state, and local agencies responsible for land use programs, permitting programs, water quality programs, enforcement authorities, habitat protection, and public health and safety;
7. Designate/delineate an inland boundary in order to more effectively manage land and water uses to protect coastal waters.

**Geographic Area:** All of Livingston Parish

**Highlights:** Regulates non-point source pollution from agricultural, forestry, hydro-modification<sup>21</sup>, marinas and recreational boating, urban runoff and wetlands, riparian areas and vegetated treatment systems.

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<sup>21</sup> *Hydromodification can be any activity that increases the velocity and volume (flow rate), and often the timing, of runoff*

**Status and Administration:** Currently being developed, will be administered by a combination of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (outside the coastal zone) and the Louisiana Department of Natural Resource (inside the coastal zone).

**Impact on Livingston Parish:** Unclear, as the program has not been adopted. It is likely to be similar to the permitting process of to the existing coastal management zone, hence there it likely increase the burden on developers. Adoption of best practices could reduce that burden, by giving anyone wishing to develop a 'road map' to approval.

## Implementation

### *Actions*

1. Adopt best practices (e.g. hydro-modification, urban run-off, wetlands, etc.), identified by the coastal management program. This could decrease the time associated with review, increase the chances development will be approved without modification.
2. Consider the implementation of a local coastal program. Convene a subcommittee recommend to the Parish Council whether or not to form a local program, subcommittee should review the Local Coastal Programs Handbook and network with other parishes with local coastal programs<sup>22</sup> to evaluated the benefits (funding opportunities, local permitting) vs. the costs (fiscal, liabilities).
3. Actively participate in the 2017 Master Plan for a Sustainable Coast Plan update and advocate for programs that impact Livingston. Defer until the parish has an expanded planning staff with capacity to implement, and/or there is significant development pressure in the Coastal Zone area.

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<sup>22</sup> Ascension parish recently dropped their petition for local management due to a lack of local resources.