

Atchafalaya Basin Program Project Descriptions & Statuses

Atchafalaya Basin Program Active Project Descriptions and Status - February 2012

The Draft FY 2013 Annual Basin Plan was developed and public meetings were held November 14, 16 & 17. The Atchafalaya Basin Research and Promotion Board met on December 1, 2011, and approved the plan with some modifications based upon public comment. The Atchafalaya Basin Program presented the Draft Fiscal Year 2013 Annual Basin Plan at the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) meeting on Wednesday, January 18, 2012. After review and consideration, CPRA approved the revised plan as consistent with Louisiana's Master Plan for a Sustainable Coast. The Atchafalaya Basin Research and Promotion Board met on January 23, 2012 and approved the revised plan. The FY 2013 Plan was submitted to the House and Senate mailed to each Legislators home office. The Annual Plan will be presented to the legislature in its 2012 Regular Session which begins March 12, 2012.

FY 2012 Annual Basin Plan Water Management Projects - Approved & Funded:

- *Upper Grand River Flats (UGRF) and the East Grand Lake Project*
- *16" & 21" Canal Construction*

Other Ongoing Water Management Projects:

- *Atchafalaya Basin Natural Resource Inventory & Assessment System (NRIAS)*
- *Dog Leg Canal Sediment Trap Maintenance Dredging*
- *Development of a Complete and Specific Plan to Address Water Quality and Sedimentation in East Grand Lake/Flat Lake/Upper Belle River Management Units through Modification of Water & Sediment Inputs*
- *Buffalo Cove Water Management Project*
- *Henderson Water Management Unit (WMU)*
- *Sherburne Freshwater Diversion Structure at Big Alabama Bayou*
- *Beau Bayou Swamp Hydrologic Restoration*
- *Henderson Lake Access Channels*
- *Big and Little Bayou Pigeon Water Improvement Projects (Engineering and Design)*

FY 2012 Annual Plan Access Projects - Approved & Funded:

- *Butte LaRose Boat Launch*

Other Ongoing Access Projects:

- *Bayou Sorrel Boat Launch*
- *Big Alabama Boat Launch Phase II*
- *Krotz Springs Boat Launch*
- *Bayou Amy Boat Launch*
- *Millet (Myette) Point Boat Launch*
- *Big Alabama Boat Launch Phase I*
- *Bayou Benoit Boat Launch*
- *Belle River Boat Launch*

Other Ongoing Projects of the Atchafalaya Basin Program

- *Catahoula Meeting Center*
- *Grosse Tete Welcome Center*
- *Doris Park*
- *Dick Davis Park, Phase II*
- *Coast Tourism Center*
- *Lake End Park Cabins*
- *Eagle Point Park*
- *Harry Hewes House*
- *Opelousas Gateway*
- *Avoyelles Interpretive Plaza*
- *Sarto Bridge*

FY 2012 Annual Basin Plan Water Management Projects - Approved & Funded

Upper Grand River Flats (UGRF) Project and the East Grand Lake (EGL) Project

The strategy of these two projects in combination with the FY 2011 “Open Location Canal” Project is to facilitate improved north-to-south flow from the Work Canal into the Upper Grand River Flats and then southward. The Upper Grand River Flats project consists of four (4) project features. The “Open Location Canal” Project is the next step southward. The EGL Project is the final step southward in this series with 171 project features to realign water input to improve water quality in the area.

Status Report: As soon as funds were made available, the UGRF and the EGL projects were assigned to engineering consultants for design. The “Open Location Canal” project had already been assigned to an engineer for design. Work continues to obtain agreements with landowners on project features that are on private lands.

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16” & 21” Canal (Construction)

Sediment from dredging the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway Alternate Route has silted up the mouths of these pipeline canals. The entrances to these two pipeline canals were to be dredged only to the degree necessary to facilitate access into the areas.

Status Report: The primary land owner will not allow this project to be implemented on that property.

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Other Ongoing Water Management Projects:

Atchafalaya Basin Natural Resource Inventory & Assessment System (NRIAS)

The Atchafalaya Basin is a resource that must be managed on a system-wide basis to ensure this invaluable national resource is protected and restored. It is recognized that we must develop better tools for managing the Basin and that data evaluation is necessary to ensure sound decision-making. The natural resource inventory and assessment system that was approved and funded in the FY 2010 Annual Plan will serve as the primary tool for decision making in the Basin. The system will provide a means for scientists to access relevant project data for the Basin and to request and fund data acquisition, monitoring, and data analysis to be used in project planning. This will be critical in providing information necessary for the development and approval of specific projects to be included for construction in future Annual Plans, projects that meet the needs of Louisiana’s citizens and protect our natural resources.



This system will also assist in evaluating how the Atchafalaya Basin may interconnect with Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) projects by providing sediment and fresh water to nurture emerging marsh habitat without having an adverse impact on Basin resources.

Status Report: Web based version of the NRIAS is now available online <http://abp.cr.usgs.gov/Home.aspx>. Enhancements to the system continue to be made working with our state and federal partners.

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Dog Leg Canal Sediment Trap Maintenance Dredging

The Dog Leg Canal was previously opened to the Atchafalaya River, at the request of commercial fishing interests, to allow fresh water to flow into this area of the Basin and improve water quality, primarily dissolved oxygen levels. A natural sediment trap existed near the Dog Leg cut that is believed to be in part responsible for the success of the project. That sediment trap is now almost completely filled, which has caused transport of sediment further into the canal. This sedimentation of the canal has decreased the canal's ability to transport fresh water into the adjoining swamp. Maintenance dredging of the Dog Leg Canal sediment trap will restore the functionality of the sediment trap and prolong the transport of fresh water from the Atchafalaya River to the swamp.

Status Report: The Corps permit has been issued and an engineer completed plans and specifications which have been reviewed by the Office Facility Planning and Control (FPC). Comments from the Office of State Purchasing are being addressed by the engineer. The construction schedule will be dependent on water levels dropping to a level that will allow project to be constructed cost effectively once the bid for construction has been awarded.



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Development of a Complete and Specific Plan to Address Water Quality and Sedimentation in East Grand Lake/Flat Lake/Upper Belle River Management Units through Modification of Water & Sediment Inputs

The East Grand Lake/Flat Lake/Upper Belle River WMU's have degraded due to water movement being blocked by sediment and spoil deposition, thereby causing low oxygen levels and loss of habitat. This project will analyze water flow and sediment deposition throughout the study area including analysis of five inputs into the system: American Pass, Bayou Sorrel, Blue Point Chute, Coon Trap Weir, Dog Leg Canal and Indigo Bayou. A plan is being developed to realign water flow patterns and strategically redirect sediment. The result of this action will be a specific list of construction items to accomplish water and sediment realignment in these WMU's, and thereby improve water quality and habitat and reduce the sedimentation of waterways and lakes.

Status Report: The Atchafalaya Basin Program has worked with the TAG and has developed scopes of services and interagency agreements to implement the project. Data collection efforts have been initiated by USGS and LSU who are collecting discharge and sediment information. Scientists have begun this planning effort and will be working with the TAG to utilize the data collected to develop a water management unit level plan for redistribution of the water and sediment. A summary document has been developed and has been placed on the Basin web site. Data will be made part of the Atchafalaya Basin National Resource Inventory and Assessment System. Projects from this planning effort have been approved by the TAG for inclusion in the FY 2012 Annual Basin Plan. Planning efforts are moving to the South in these WMUs.

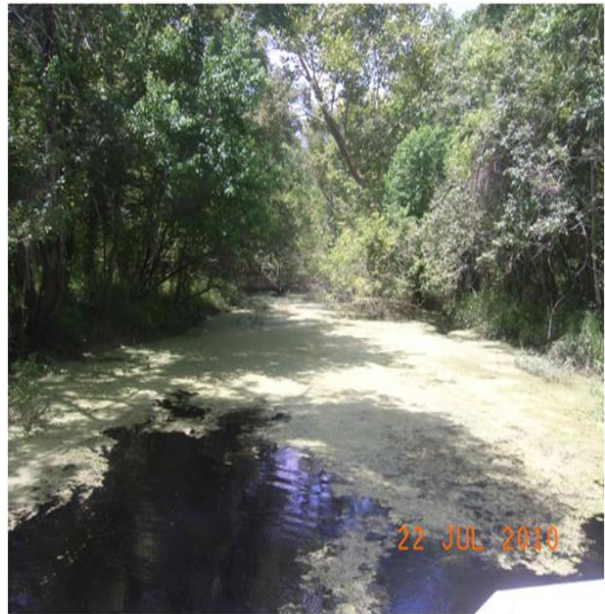


Figure 1. Poor Water Quality in East Grand Lake WMU

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- [Summary Report](#)
- [FY2012 Annual Plan Project Descriptions](#)

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Buffalo Cove Water Management Project

The Buffalo Cove Water Management Project was designed to improve water circulation and sediment management in the Buffalo Cove Water Management Unit in an effort to enhance fish and wildlife resources. The project includes the improvement of interior circulation within the swamp; the removal of barriers to north-south flow; the input of oxygenated, low temperature river water; and the prevention or management of sediment input into the interior swamps.

The project location is the lower Basin in Iberia, St. Martin and St. Mary parishes. The USACE began construction on Buffalo Cove in 2004, and the project was estimated to benefit more than 7,500 acres initially and 53,000 to 58,000 acres eventually.

Status Report: Previously constructed elements include 1, 8, 9-1 and 7. (See map.) The USACE received funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 to complete construction of additional elements of the project. Construction Element 9-2 in the Buffalo Cove Water Management Unit was completed in 2010. The USACE is in the process of easement acquisition for the remaining elements prior to construction. Once the last element is constructed, the USACE is required to monitor the project's effectiveness for a five-year period. The USACE (New Orleans District) has indicated that it has received a firm commitment for funding (\$7 million) that can be used for authorized projects, including Buffalo Cove. A meeting is set with the TAG to allow them to collaborate with the USACE on project priorities for the use of those funds.



Figure 2. Element 9-2 constructed at Buffalo Cove

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Henderson Water Management Unit (WMU)

In an October 2006 scoping report, the USACE identified three major challenges within the Henderson WMU in St. Martin and St. Landry Parishes: hydrology, environment/habitat, and environmental quality. With regard to hydrology, the use, control, and function of the water control structures at the northern and southern end of the WMU was the main concern, followed by restoring the area's water flow patterns. Constructing a freshwater distribution structure to increase water flow throughout the WMU was an additional concern. Habitat issues that are considered a primary component of the

project include the control of invasive aquatic vegetation, protecting the native habitat, and the effects of initiating these activities.

Status Report: This project is in the planning stage. Proposed actions, benefits, and alternatives are being evaluated, as well as additional details such as dredging dimensions, the size of gaps to be cut to restore water flow patterns, and measures to introduce additional flows into the upper end of the WMU. The USACE-led planning group, consisting of state and federal agencies, is holding periodic meetings to complete the planning documents. A Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement is being prepared and is scheduled for public release in July 2012.

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Sherburne Freshwater Diversion Structure at Big Alabama Bayou

This project was authorized by the Water Resource Development Act of 1986 in accordance with the plan recommended in the February 1983 Chief's Report. The plan included construction of freshwater distribution structures from the Atchafalaya River to provide water inflow into the Alabama Bayou area. To date, no funds have been budgeted for or allocated to this effort by the USACE; however, the Atchafalaya Basin Program is actively working with the USACE NOD to move this project forward.

Status Report: This project is in the planning stage. Discussions with the USACE have taken place to provide future funding for the project. Corps is evaluating appropriate funding mechanism that may be utilized for this project. Meeting has been held with Corps to discuss project status and the Corps has informed the ABP that the project is on hold as funds that had been budgeted for the Engineering Documentation Report have been redirected to address public safety issues brought forth by the 2011 flood.

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Beau Bayou Swamp Hydrologic Restoration

Beau Bayou Swamp is located in the west central region of the Atchafalaya Basin in St. Martin Parish. Once known as a highly productive fisheries area, hydrologic manipulation within the Atchafalaya Basin from levee construction, pipeline canal spoil banks, sediment diversions, and channelization of the Atchafalaya River led to hypoxic conditions within Beau Bayou Swamp, along with many of the Basin's other interior swamps. Most of the natural bayous and man-made canals flowing into Beau Bayou Swamp carry significant amounts of sediment adding to the already degraded condition of the swamp. The initially proposed Beau Bayou hydrologic restoration project would include

- Dredging of Beau Bayou through the center of the swamp, along with dredging of some of the natural waterways. Dredged material is to be used beneficially to address subsidence problems within the adjacent swamp. Any exposed spoil is to be vegetated with native plants.
- Gapping of the natural levee along the northern east section of Bayou L'Embaras to allow for the exchange of freshwater and nutrients into the swamp.
- Creation of inline sediment traps to reduce the sediment load currently flowing into Beau Bayou Swamp.

St. Martin Parish has been approved to receive \$3,701,400 in Coastal Impact Assistance Program funds to advance the Beau Bayou project.

Status Report St. Martin Parish has hired an engineering firm for the project, which is currently in the preliminary design stage. Initial meetings have been held with the Basin Program, U.S. Fish & Wildlife and contractors to review work performed to date and identify and prioritize optional features for improving water quality. Additional meetings with stakeholders are anticipated. The engineering firm has conducted surveying work in this WMU, and is developing preliminary cost estimates for the prioritized optional features.

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Henderson Lake Access Channels

This project is being implemented through a cooperative endeavor agreement between the Atchafalaya Basin Program and St. Martin Parish Government. It consists of dredging canals from the existing boat launches along the West Guideline Levee of the Atchafalaya Basin into Lake Henderson to facilitate boat traffic during low water periods that are due to the periodic lowering of lake levels for the ongoing hydrilla control project. Dredging will also create deep water fish habitat during low water periods.

Status Report: Easements needed to complete project have been acquired. The permit to construct the project has been received from the Corps of Engineers. Preparation of engineering plans and specifications is complete and comments from Facility Planning and Control are being addressed by the engineer.

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Big and Little Bayou Pigeon Water Improvement Projects (Engineering and Design)

The primary property owner will not allow dredged material to be placed on his property. However, previously unknown land owners have been identified and the consulting engineer has been tasked with 1) determining if the dredged material could be located on those properties and, 2) providing cost estimates for that alternative and other potential alternatives for dredged material.

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FY 2012 Annual Plan Access Projects - Approved & Funded

Butte LaRose Boat Launch

Upgrades to this launch were proposed in the State Master Plan. The project involves upgrading the Butte LaRose Boat Launch at the Atchafalaya River by extending the launch to accommodate safe launching when the rivers falls below three to four feet at the Butte LaRose gauge, as well as other improvements.

Status Report: Contracts and Grants sent the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement to St. Martin Parish for execution in January 2012. St. Martin officials returned the signed CEA to DNR and it is being routed for signatures at DNR and at FPC.

Other Ongoing Access Projects

Bayou Sorrel Boat Launch

This project to construct improvements at the current location of the Bayou Sorrel boat launch has been an ongoing project of the USACE, the State of Louisiana and Iberville Parish Government. The proposed project consists of two new concrete ramps with five-lanes each, a new floating courtesy dock adjacent to one of the ramps, and a relocated floating courtesy dock adjacent to the other ramp, concrete landings adjacent to the boat ramps; expanding and improving a crushed stone parking area; security and restroom shelter, access roads; demolition of the existing ramp; electrical service to power and light the facility.

Status Report: Funding for this launch has been provided through capital outlay in the FY 2011 Annual Basin Plan. Iberville Parish has elected to move forward with this funding immediately and intends to construct the facility as soon as possible. Project scope has been developed and contract has been drafted and signed by Iberville Parish and was reviewed by Facility Planning and Control. Engineering Plans and Specifications are currently being revised after the original design estimate exceeded the funding available

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Big Alabama Boat Launch Phase II

The Sherburne Wildlife Management Area, which is operated and maintained by the DWF, has between 30,000 and 40,000 visitors annually. The first phase of this boat launch project which renovated the existing boat launch did not contain adequate funds for other needed improvements. This second phase will include the addition of a handicapped accessible fishing pier and a modular handicapped accessible restroom facility.

Status Report: Construction had been initiated; the project is now on hold due to high water. Construction will recommence when water levels drop.

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Krotz Springs Boat Launch

The Krotz Springs Boat Launch project in St. Landry Parish is the subject of a cooperative agreement between the State of Louisiana and the Greater Krotz Springs Port Commission. The facility will consist of coordinated signage to the site and improved access from the service road, construction of a new concrete three-lane boat launch with floating courtesy dock, renovation of the existing launch into a canoe launch, expansion of parking area, security lighting, landscaping and curbing.

Status Report: Construction has been initiated and concrete has been poured. Issues have been identified regarding launch stability and actions are being taken to see that issues are addressed.



Figure 3. Construction has begun on the Krotz Springs Boat Launch

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Bayou Amy Boat Launch

This new boat launch facility is already funded and will be constructed on Bayou Amy, directly across from the Atchafalaya Basin western guide levee in Henderson, Louisiana. The project will include a new boat launch, parking area, and docking facility. Additional improvements are being designed at this site, and that component will be funded with St. Martin Parish CIAP funds. That portion of the project will include an educational pavilion, self guided nature boardwalk, and a restroom facility.

Status Report: Wetland delineation has been completed by the Corps of Engineers. The permit application has been submitted to the Corps of Engineers for this project and is under review.

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Millet (Myette) Point Boat Launch

The Millet (Myette) Point Boat Launch project is the subject of a cooperative agreement between the USACE and the St. Mary Parish Government. The project area is in the vicinity of the town of Charenton, Louisiana, in St. Mary Parish. Construction began in September 2007. The purpose of the proposed action is to provide a point of entry into the Lower Atchafalaya Basin Floodway for recreational fishing vessels, commercial fishing vessels, hunters, crew boats, federal and state government personnel, and others.

This project consists of a new concrete boat ramp with five lanes (four lane boat launch and one canoe launch) to be constructed; a new floating courtesy dock adjacent to the ramp; a concrete apron adjacent to the boat ramp that will be constructed by pre-loading the site and installing wick drains; a comfort station (restroom); a crushed stone parking area; upgrading of existing public roads used for ingress and egress; partial demolition and partial removal of an existing boat ramp with the remainder of said ramp converted into a canoe launch; water service for the comfort station; a sewage treatment plant; electrical service to power and light the comfort station and service to light the parking area and boat ramp; and landscaping.



Figure 4. Millet (Myette) Point Boat Launch is now open

Status Report: A ribbon cutting ceremony was held on October 14, 2010, and the launch is now open and operational. Project has been completed.

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Big Alabama Boat Launch Phase I

This new two-lane boat launch, with a center pedestrian pier is located in Pointe Coupee Parish in the state owned Sherburne Wildlife Management Area, located in the Morganza Floodway system of the Atchafalaya Basin. The Sherburne WMA adjoins other properties, including the lands owned by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the USACE. The total site including all three government properties totals 44,000 acres.

Status Report: Construction has been completed and facility is in use.

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Bayou Benoit Boat Launch

This launch was originally constructed with grant funds from a Wallop-Breaux Grant. Planned improvements will consist of the construction of a floating dock to allow boaters to tie up their boats while parking trailers.

Status Report: Construction has been completed and facility



is in use.

Figure 5. Floating dock and lighting was installed at Bayou Benoit Launch

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Belle River Boat Launch



Figure 6. Modular restrooms now operational.

This project is already funded and involves the installation of restroom facilities at the existing Belle River boat launch. The boat launch is operated and maintained by the Atchafalaya Basin Levee District.

Status Report: Modular restrooms have been installed at the launch and are operational.

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Other Ongoing Projects of the Atchafalaya Basin Program

Catahoula Meeting Center



This project entailed the design and construction of a new pavilion in the Clayton Boudreaux Park in Catahoula. It also entailed the repair of the existing concession stand building adjacent to the old pavilion, and demolishing the old pavilion.

Status Report: Construction was initiated in summer 2011 and is now reported as complete.

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Grosse Tete Welcome Center

This project was to construct a visitor's center located in Grosse Tete adjacent to I-10. The facility includes a reception/visitor area, one office, restroom facilities and coffee/vending area.

Status Report: This facility has been completed and is in use.



Figure 7. Grosse Tete Welcome Center is open

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Doris Park



Figure 8. This facility has been completed and is in use.

This project consisted of final design, specifications and construction of iron fencing between brick columns, an iron fountain surrounded by a seat wall, brick and concrete walkways, benches, trash receptacles, an irrigation system, sub-surface drainage and landscaping.

Status Report: This facility has been completed and is in use.

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Dick Davis Park, Phase II

This project includes new fencing installed along the highway, lighting and ground surfacing for 18 RV camping sites.

Status Report: Construction has been completed on this project, with the exception of the fencing.



Figure 9. Construction completed on Dick Davis Park, Phase II.

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Coast Tourism Center

This project will assist St. Mary Parish with funding for construction of a Welcome Center which will offer travelers a view of cypress-tupelo swamp as well as refreshments and restroom facilities.

Status Report: This project is funded with capital outlay, local funds, and basin funds. Contracts have been signed. Notice to proceed with construction has been issued and electrical lines have been buried and activated. Construction was anticipated to be completed in the first quarter of 2012 but was delayed due to high water event but is now progressing.



Figure 10. Construction of the Cajun Coast Tourism Center is underway in St. Mary Parish.

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Lake End Park Cabins

This project is to design and construct cabins at Lake End Park in Morgan City as outlined in the State Master Plan.

Status Report: Cabin design has been completed, and some construction funding was provided as part of the FY 2011 Annual Basin Plan. The number of cabins to be built in Phase I is dependent upon the level of funding that Morgan City will be able to obtain to supplement the funding provided by the Basin Program. Bond commission has approved funding for Basin Program. Cooperative Endeavor agreement has been executed and plans and specs have been developed and approved by Facility Planning. Bids were opened on January 24, 2012, and the bids were reviewed. Morgan City has indicated that they will submit the concurrence package in March.

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Eagle Point Park

This project was to plan, design and construct a parish park along the northwest shore of Lake Fausse Point in Iberia Parish.

Status Report: A cooperative endeavor agreement has not been executed on this project. DNR sent a CEA to the recreation district but it was never returned. Land donation does not appear to be moving forward. Further discussion must take place between project sponsors and property owners to resolve issues prior to project moving forward.

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Harry Hewes House

This project will provide funding for improvements to the Harry Hewes House, including exterior lighting, carpentry on the second floor, plumbing and painting.

Status Report: Project has been completed.

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Opelousas Gateway

This project included improvements to landscaping, additional fencing and additional lighting along both sides of Landry Street and the fencing of the historic Myrtle Grove Cemetery.

Status Report: Project has been completed.

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Avoyelles Interpretive Plaza

This project will include installation of an Atchafalaya Basin Interpretive display, historic cistern lighting, landscaping and handrail and steps repair.

Status Report: Project has been completed.

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Sarto Bridge

This project will replace existing approach pilings and bridge flooring to facilitate pedestrian access over bridge to east side recreation and picnic area. A portion of the funds will be used to fund the local match needed for the Federal Enhancement grant that has been awarded for this project.

Status Report: Project has been completed.

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