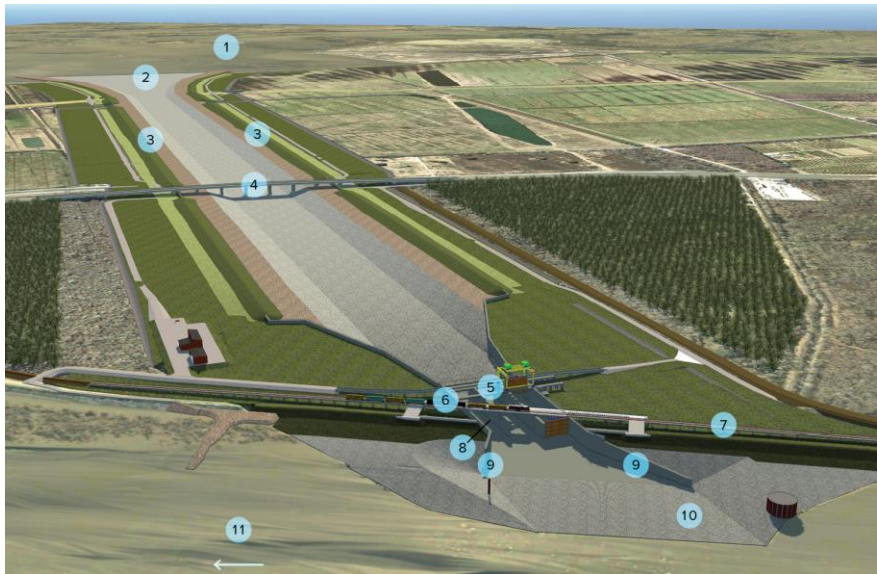




Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion

Final Phase II Restoration Plan #3.2



ELEMENTS OF THE DIVERSION PROJECT

- 1 BARATARIA BASIN
- 2 OUTFALL TRANSITION
- 3 CHANNEL GUIDE LEVEES
- 4 HWY 23 BRIDGE
- 5 GATED STRUCTURE
- 6 RAILROAD ACCESS BRIDGE
- 7 MISSISSIPPI RIVER LEVEE
- 8 U-FRAME INTAKE STRUCTURE
- 9 U-FRAME TRAINING WALLS
- 10 INTAKE ARMORING
- 11 MISSISSIPPI RIVER

RESTORING WETLANDS AFTER DEEPWATER HORIZON

The Louisiana Trustee Implementation Group prepared the Final Phase II Restoration Plan #3.2 to evaluate a proposed large-scale sediment diversion connecting the Mississippi River to the Barataria Basin. The estuary was one of the areas most impacted by the April 2010 *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill. Large-scale Mississippi River sediment diversions are envisioned as a significant component of restoration for Louisiana’s coasts.

The project outlined in the plan would harness nature to re-establish processes that originally built and sustained coastal Louisiana. At peak capacity, the diversion would allow the controlled transport of up to 75,000 cubic feet per second of Mississippi River freshwater, sediment and nutrients into the Barataria estuary.

By re-introducing a sediment supply into the Barataria Basin, the project would build and sustain more than 13,000 acres—or 20 square miles—of wetlands and recreate a functional estuary in the basin.

The Final Restoration Plan fully evaluates the proposed project and considers and incorporates changes from public input received after the Draft Restoration Plan was published in March 2021. The Final Plan and associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) are available at the Gulf Spill Restoration website:

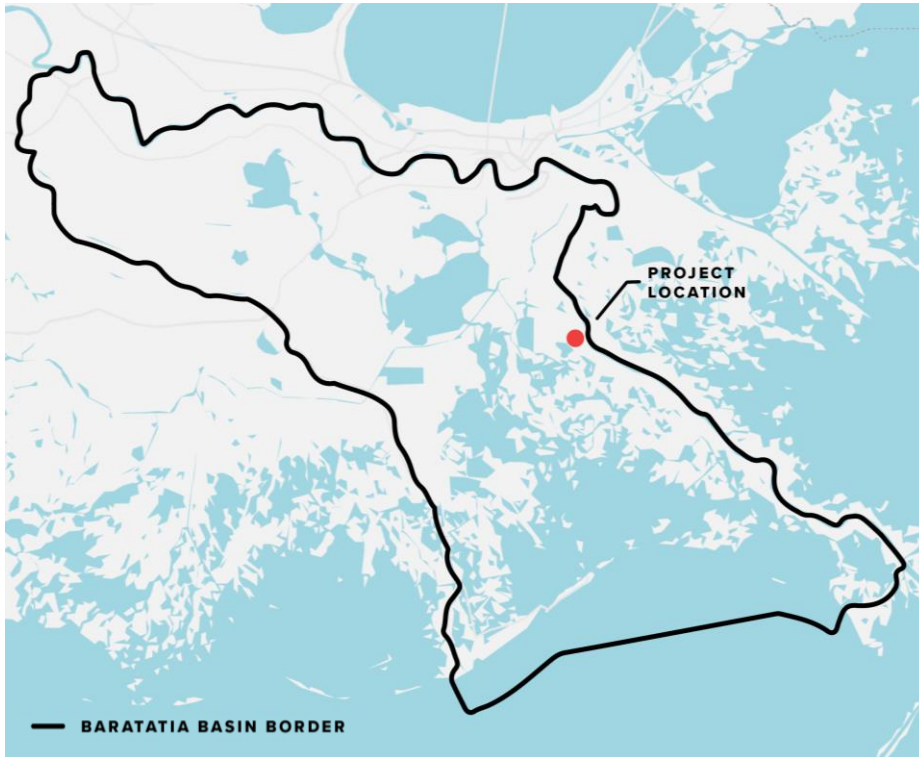
www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov





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BENEFITS

The benefits of reconnecting the Mississippi River to the Barataria estuary are expected to be sustained over decades, even in the face of rising sea levels and coastal erosion.

Restored wetlands provide critical foraging, nursery, and nesting grounds for hundreds of species of fish and wildlife. Increased freshwater in the estuary would benefit fisheries species including blue crab, red drum, and largemouth bass. The restored habitats and food webs in the estuary would also support healthier offshore ecosystems of the northern Gulf of Mexico.

More resilient wetlands improve the overall resilience of the region. The wetlands created and sustained by this project would help protect the marshlands against future environmental stressors, reduce the rate of wetland loss, and reduce the risks to local infrastructure from storms.

ESTIMATED COSTS

\$2.26 billion in Natural Resource Damage Assessment funding would be dedicated for the restoration planning, mitigation, monitoring and construction of the Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion. This includes a suite of stewardship actions and mitigation measures to address impacts to communities and fisheries. The Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) is responsible for securing any further funds necessary.





Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion

Final Phase II Restoration Plan #3.2



Photo by Jeanne Allen

PUBLIC INPUT

Public comment solicited on the Draft Restoration Plan resulted in submissions from over 140 organizations, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), environmental justice groups, communities, individuals, fisheries organizations, and state and local governments. Approximately 700 unique and 40,000 total comments were submitted.

As a result of public input, the Final Restoration includes an increase in funding, to \$378 million, dedicated to mitigation and stewardship actions to minimize impacts where possible. Details on these actions are available in Appendix B of the plan.

NEXT STEPS

The Trustees will make a final decision on implementing the plan by late 2022 or early 2023.

IMPACTS

In preparing this plan, the Trustees recognized that the scale of the project would result in adverse impacts to those natural resources that rely on higher salinity waters, particularly dolphins, brown shrimp, and oysters. The project would also increase water levels in the vicinity of the diversion.

MORE INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE ONLINE

www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov/restoration-areas/louisiana

midbasin.coastal.la.gov

