

Louisiana prides itself on being the greatest producer of oysters in the USA. Yet most Louisiana citizens don't realize that the CPRA Coastal Master Plan for protecting and restoring the coastal zone will result in the destruction of our oyster industry.^[1] The survival of our oyster industry depends on educating the public that this CPRA policy is wrong...that the destruction of the oyster industry is not a necessary cost of protecting and restoring the coastal zone.

If we say that the diversions are wrong, our solution must provide as much or more storm protection as the CPRA solution. This can occur if the diversions are redesigned to capture the freshwater and sediment behind levees as occurs in surge-reservoirs. Surge reservoirs receive and hold rising water and sediment during flood stage and release the water back into the river after the flood has passed. The levees of these redesigned diversions/reservoirs will prevent the destruction caused by the polluted-Mississippi-River-water floods of the CPRA-style diversions and will protect the dry- and wet-land being built inside the reservoirs from erosion by wind and waves.

A study led by Tulane University^[2] says that 70% to 95% of the sediment delivered by CPRA-style diversions will be washed away by wind and waves. Gone with the wind. The increase in storm protection will be minimal. On the other hand, the levees and enclosed wet-and dry-land being built by surge reservoirs will create "immediate," solid increases in storm protection. The citizens of Louisiana understand the difference: for the past 300 years, levees have been the preferred choice for flood protection.

Our nation's current policy of No Net Loss of Wetland^[3] should be updated to encourage dry-land storm barriers in Louisiana because "No Net Loss of Wetland" in coastal Louisiana is an impossible goal. One storm can erase miles of unprotected wetland built from years of sediment diversion.

The Oyster Task Force is mandated by State Law RS 56:421 to lead the development of the oyster industry and provide a vision for its future. That vision should include the re-establishment and expansion of the oyster industry in southeastern Louisiana. To achieve this goal, southeastern Louisiana must be protected from climate-changed, Mississippi River floods and accompanying human and industrial pollution. The salinity required for oyster production must be recreated and managed. This can be done by redesigning all freshwater/sediment diversions into southeastern Louisiana to build dry-land storm protection structures that also define and protect expanded oyster production zones.^[4]

To secure the future of the Louisiana Oyster Industry, the Oyster Task Force should begin a public education campaign to convince the public that Louisiana can have both effective storm protection and an expanding oyster industry. The rallying cry of the campaign should be: Combine Storm Surge Protection with Oyster Industry Revitalization.

^[1] [See comments relative to Mid-Breton Sound Sediment Diversion](#)

^[2] [See document.](#)

^[3] "restoration and mitigation collectively have not been able to keep pace with wetland losses". [See document.](#)

^[4] See [suggested SE Louisiana Oyster Development Plan](#)