



LWI Region 5

Provisional Governance Recommendation



LOUISIANA
WATERSHED
INITIATIVE

working together for sustainability and resilience



AGENDA

- Overview of the Louisiana Watershed Initiative
- Towards regional watershed management
- Provisional Governance Recommendation



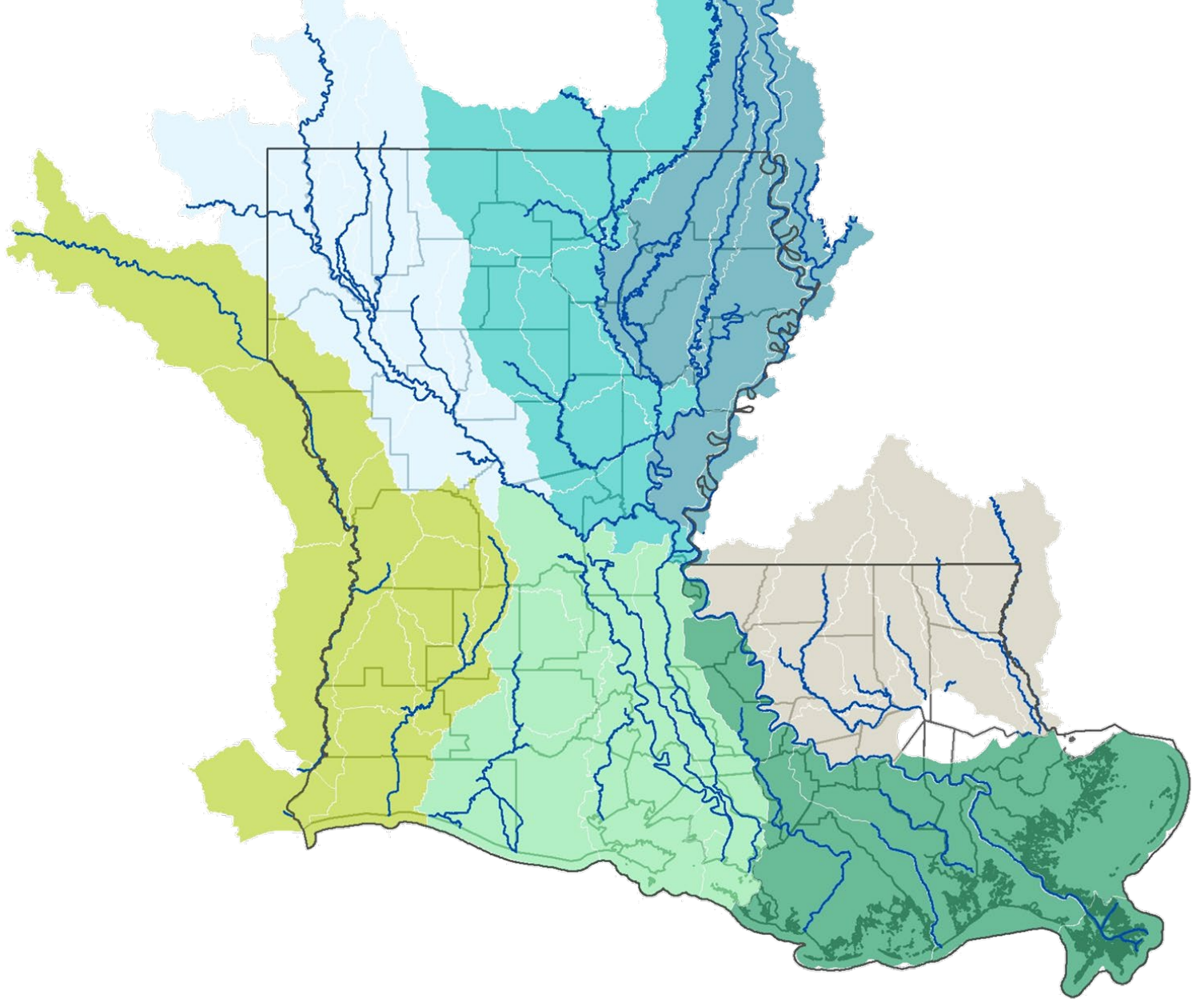


Overview of the Louisiana Watershed Initiative



The challenge

- Flooding does not follow political boundaries, as major watersheds cross parish and state lines.
- Actions in one community can impact entire ecosystems.



The opportunity

- Fundamentally change how Louisiana addresses flood risk reduction
- Create a regional watershed-based approach to floodplain management

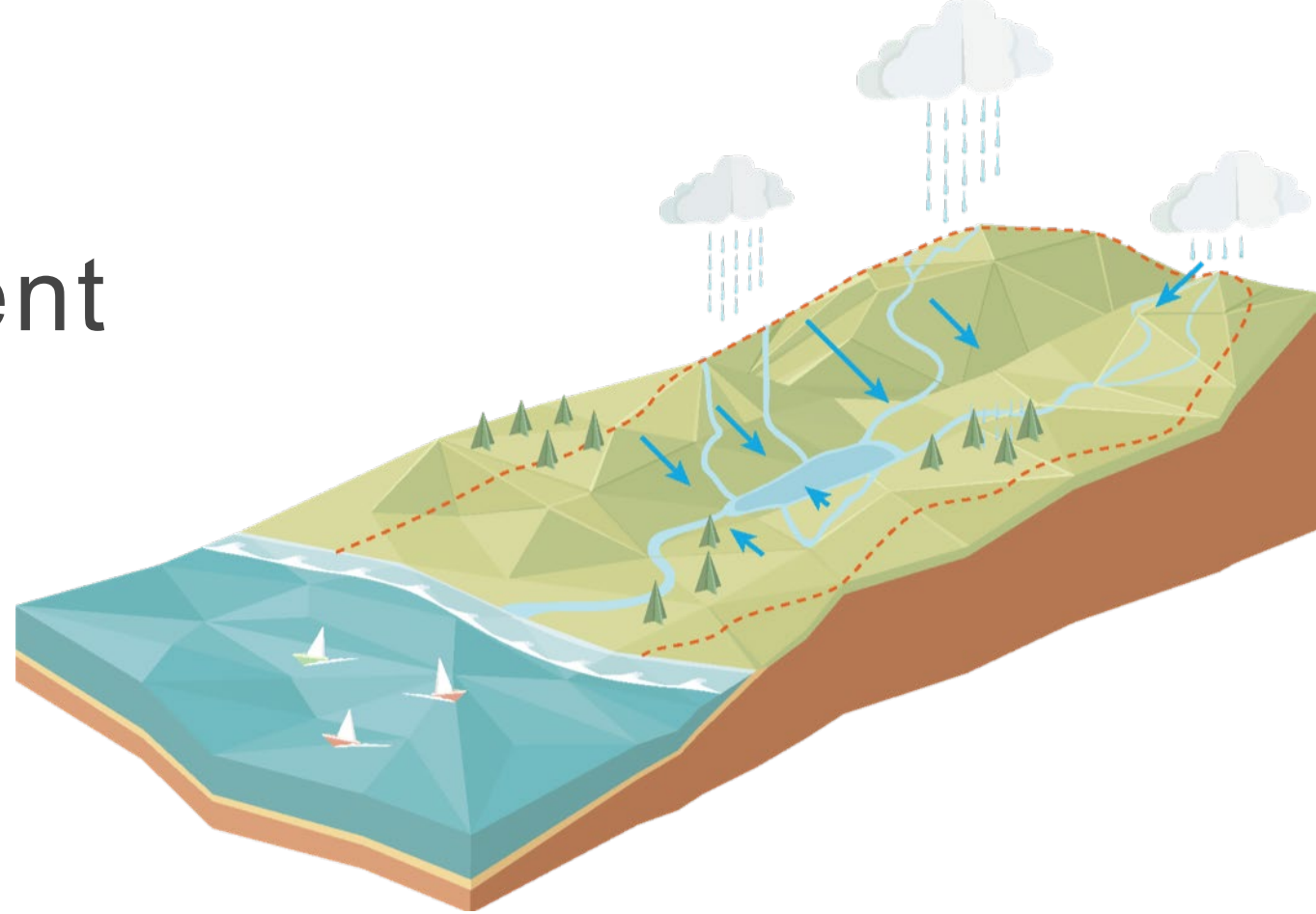


CANE BAYOU, MANDEVILLE



Watershed-based floodplain management

- A watershed, or drainage basin, is an area of land that drains to a common point.
- A large watershed contains other smaller watersheds, each bound by natural ridges and human elements in the landscape.





Towards regional watershed management



Guiding principles

SCIENTIFIC TOOLS AND APPROACHES

TRANSPARENT AND OBJECTIVE
DECISION MAKING

MAXIMIZING NATURAL FUNCTION
OF FLOODPLAINS

REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT



RED RIVER, GRAND ECORE





Council on Watershed Management

“It’s harder. It requires more work. It’s politically risky, but it is the right thing to do.”

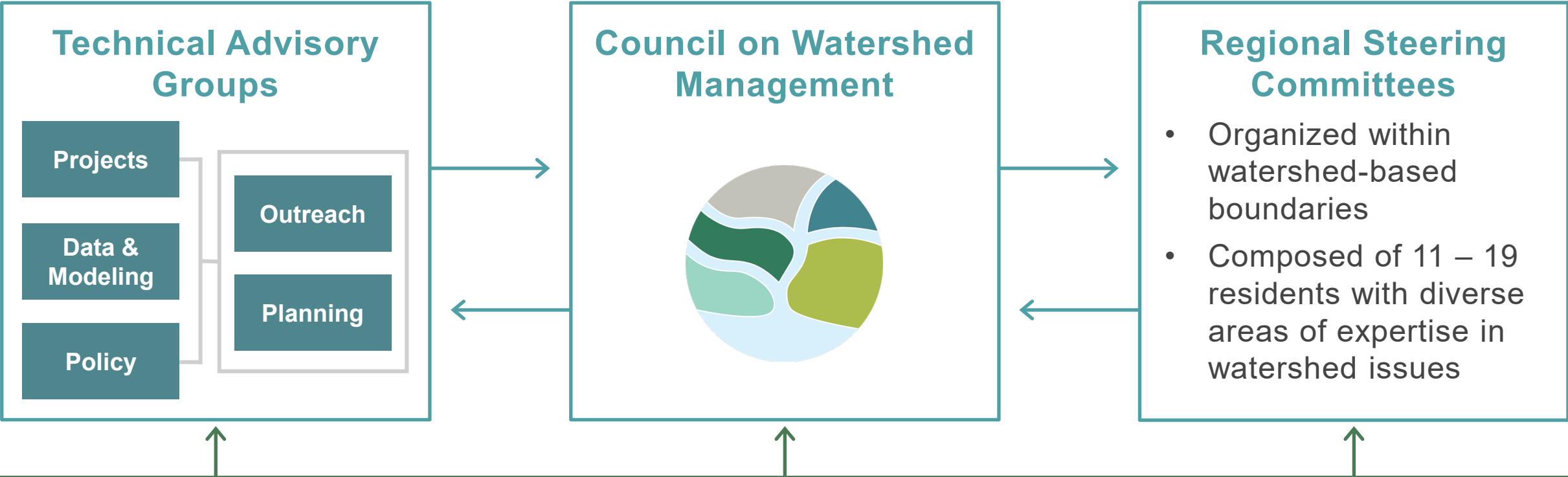
-GOV. JOHN BEL EDWARDS



LOUISIANA
Office of
**COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT**



A shared focus on resilience



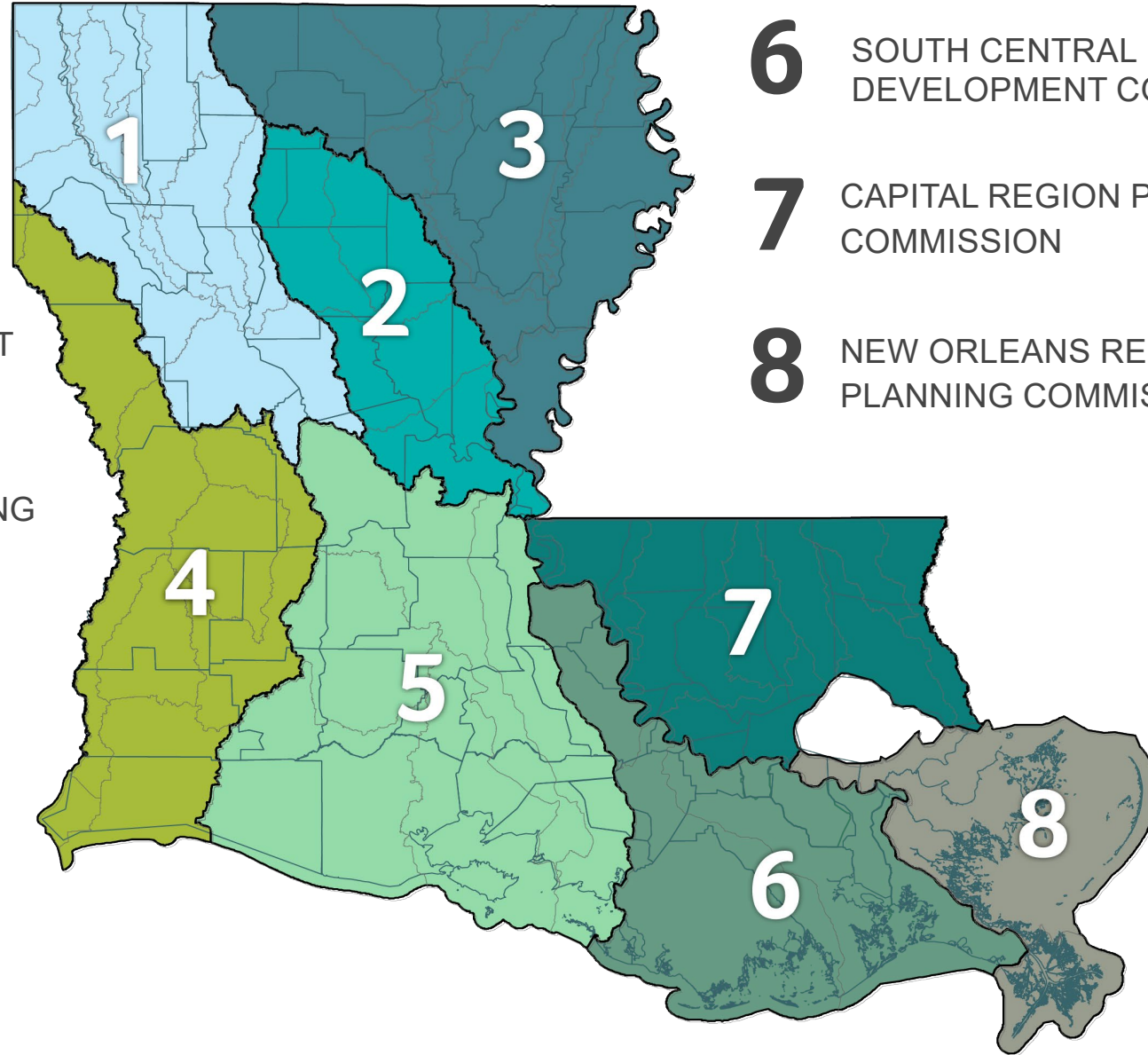
Overview

- Established by the Governor in response to the 2016 floods
- Council on Watershed Management is overseeing the \$1.2 billion in flood mitigation allocated to the State by HUD through the state Office of Community Development
- Goal is to improve water management to proactively and effectively address flood risks and mitigation
- Holistic, regional approach to understand flood risk to better select projects for each watershed region



Coordinating agencies

- 1** THE COORDINATING & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
- 2** KISATCHIE-DELTA REGIONAL PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
- 3** OUACHITA PARISH POLICE JURY
- 4** CALCASIEU PARISH POLICE JURY
- 5** ACADIANA PLANNING COMMISSION



- 6** SOUTH CENTRAL PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
- 7** CAPITAL REGION PLANNING COMMISSION
- 8** NEW ORLEANS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION



Allocated HUD Funds - \$1.2 Billion

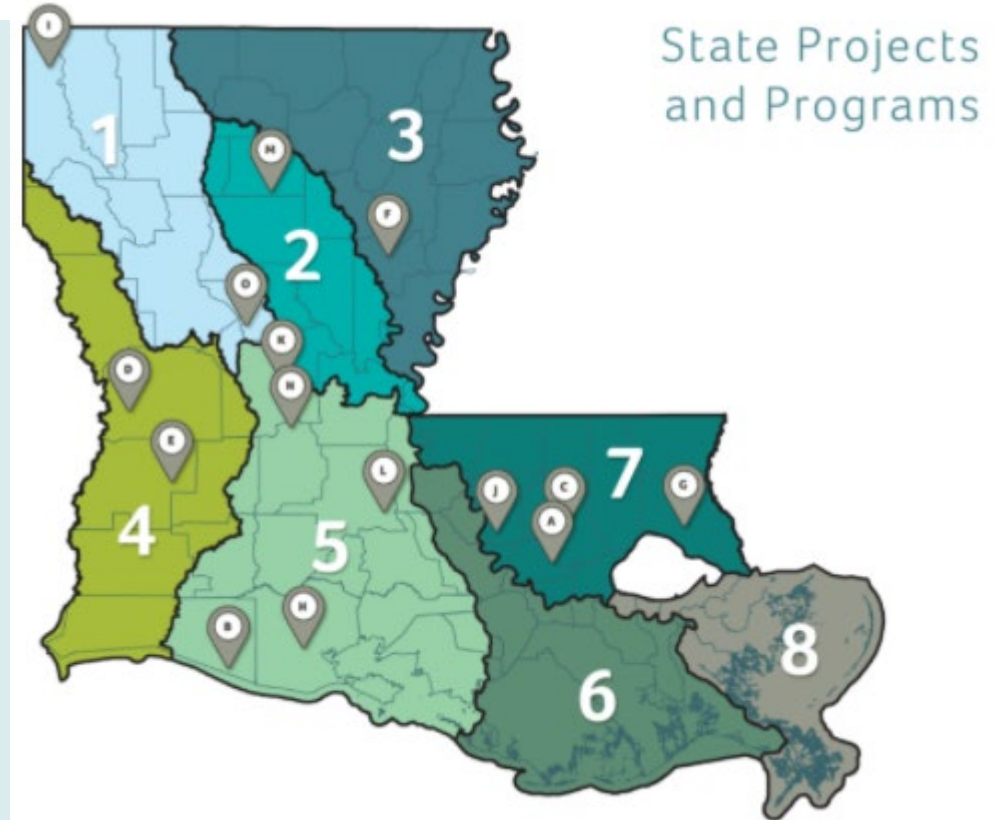
LOCAL AND REGIONAL WATERSHED PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS	\$571 million
STATE WATERSHED PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS	\$328 million
WATERSHED MONITORING, MAPPING AND MODELING	\$146 million
NON-FEDERAL COST SHARE ASSISTANCE	\$97 million
ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS	\$49 million
WATERSHED POLICY, PLANNING AND LOCAL CAPACITY ASSISTANCE	\$24 million



State projects and programs

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- Phase 1 includes \$163 million in flood risk reduction, drainage and critical infrastructure projects that provide crucial flood mitigation.
- Press Release on March 23rd for award announcements - contracts are in development with project applicants.
- 5 of the 15 projects are in Region 5
 - Total of \$43.87 million



PHASE 1 SPP PROJECTS STATEWIDE



Watershed Projects Grant Program

LOCAL AND REGIONAL – ROUND 1

Objective

Implement low-risk, high-impact projects that mitigate flood risk and encourage the prioritization of projects through regional collaboration



BLUEBONNET STORMWATER DETENTION



Watershed Projects Grant Program Funding

LOCAL AND REGIONAL - ROUND 1

UP TO \$100 MILLION



UP TO \$60 MILLION

Projects selected by state
(regionally implemented)

+

UP TO \$40 MILLION

Projects selected by region
(Up to \$5 million per region)



Updated program timeline

LOCAL AND REGIONAL – ROUND 1

EVENT	DATE
State issued NOFA and solicited project applications	Nov. 22, 2019
Deadline to submit project pre-applications	Jan. 17, 2020
Round 1 application period opened	Sept. 18, 2020
Deadline to submit full project applications	Deadline extended to March 12, 2021
Awards announced for \$60 million in statewide projects*	May 2021
Recommendations for \$40 million in regional projects	Summer 2021

**Note: The number of applications received may impact projected timelines*



Applications received

- The state is processing and reviewing 190 applications.
- *Reminder:* This is the first of multiple rounds of funding that will be made available over the 12-year grant period.



Watershed Projects Grant Program: Local and Regional - Round 1

This program represents a \$100 million project funding opportunity for eligible local and regional projects that will address immediate flood mitigation needs. The funding opportunity is part of the state's Action Plan to spend \$1.2 billion in Community Development Block Grant Mitigation funds. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development signed the grant agreement with the state Sept. 17, 2020, establishing the \$1.2 billion line of credit to begin funding these and other LWI priorities.

Full Application

The state is accepting full applications for the Round 1 funding opportunity. **The submission deadline for [eligible projects](#) has been extended to March 12, 2021.** The deadline for submitting pre-applications has expired. If your pre-application was denied, stay tuned for future funding opportunities or contact us at LWI-Round1@la.gov.

[Eligible Pre-Application Projects](#)

[Application submission portal](#)

[Technical Assistance Webinar](#)



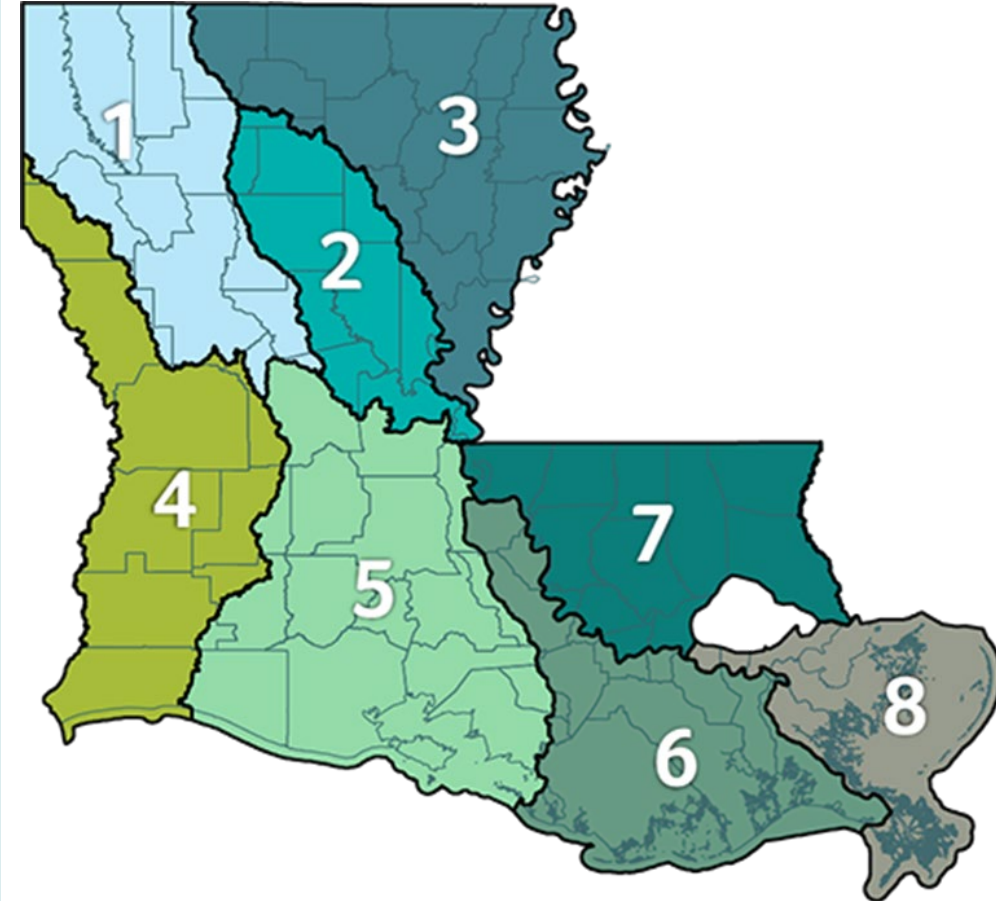
REGIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING GRANT PROGRAM



Watershed Region Coordination

The state awarded \$400,000 per watershed region to:

- Form regional steering committees (year 1); form watershed coalitions/managing entities (years 2,3)
- Provide recommendations for long-term regional watershed management frameworks
- Build regional staff capacity in outreach and floodplain management at the watershed scale
- Produce a regional capital improvement inventory of flood risk reduction projects

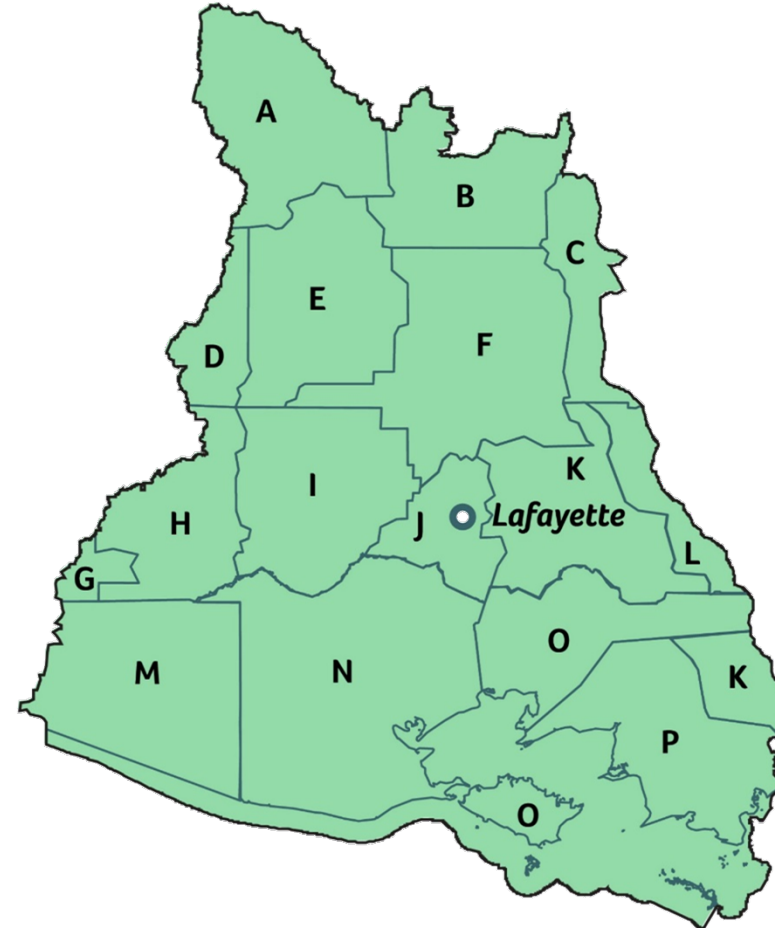


PROVISIONAL WATERSHED REGIONS



LOUISIANA WATERSHED INITIATIVE REGION 5

- Boundaries are defined by watershed, not geography
- 16 parishes
- Some parishes may be in multiple regions

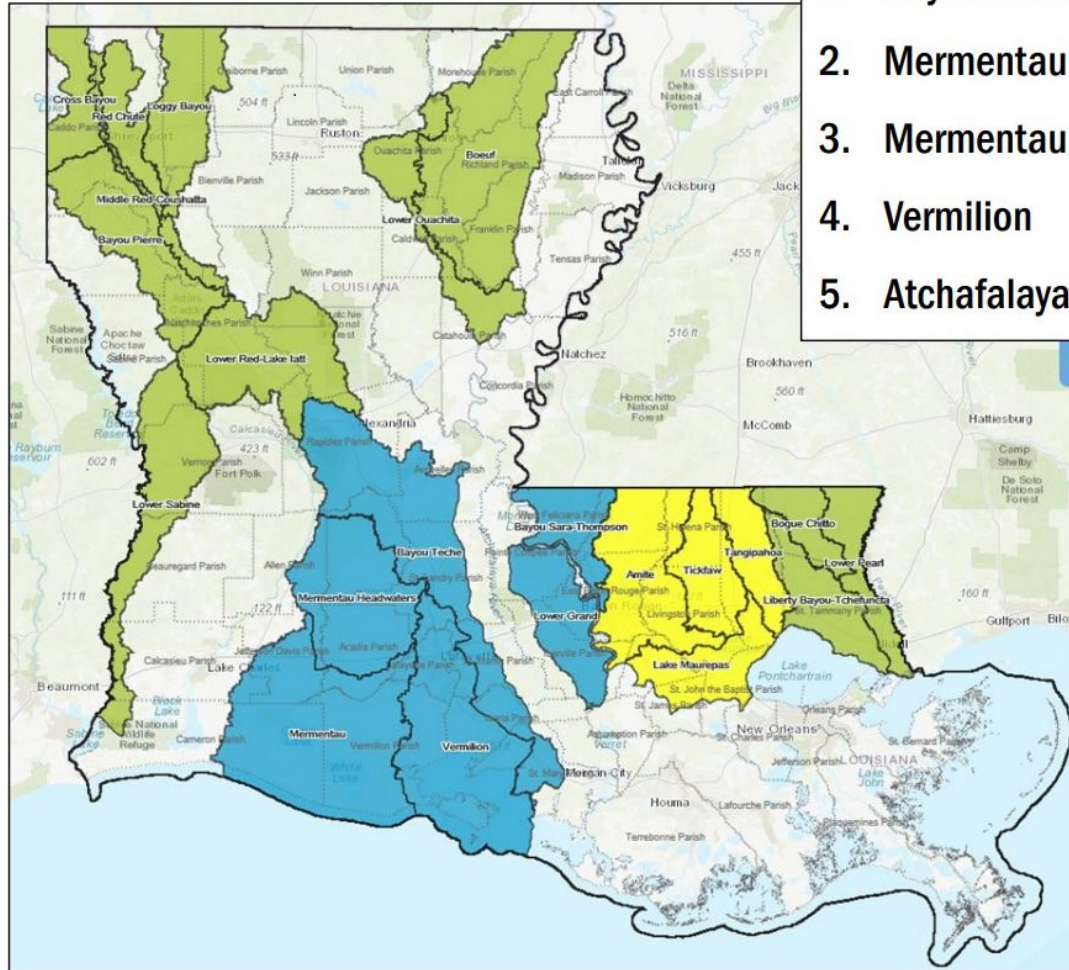


- A - RAPIDES
- B - AVOYELLES
- C - POINTE COUPEE
- D - ALLEN
- E - EVANGELINE
- F - ST. LANDRY
- G - CALCASIEU
- H - JEFFERSON DAVIS
- I - ACADIA
- J - LAFAYETTE
- K - ST. MARTIN
- L - IBERVILLE
- M - CAMERON
- N - VERMILION
- O - IBERIA
- P - ST. MARY



Region 5 Watersheds and Areas of Study

1. Bayou Teche
2. Mermentau Headwaters
3. Mermentau
4. Vermilion
5. Atchafalaya Basin interaction



STEERING COMMITTEE STRUCTURE



Steering Committee

Acadia Parish Earl Garber	Pointe Coupee Parish Mark Ward
Allen Parish Gardner Rose	Rapides Parish Matt Johns
Avoyelles Parish Jimmy Landry	St. Landry Parish Karl Aucoin
Calcasieu Parish Terry Frelot	St. Martin Parish Chester Cedars
Cameron Parish Scooter Trosclair	St. Mary Parish Tim Matte
Evangeline Parish Donald Bergeron	Vermilion Ralph Libersat
Iberia Parish Larry Richard	Pamela Granger APC Appointee
Iberville Parish John Clark	Emad Habib APC Appointee
Jeff Davis Parish John Marceaux	Donald Sagraera APC Appointee
Lafayette Parish Stephanie Weeks	



Sub-Committees

Governance / Long-term Sustainability

Capital Improvement Program

CRS / Floodplain Management



Provisional Governance Recommendations

Louisiana Watershed Initiative is finalizing the phase where all the regions have submitted a recommendation for a long-term governance structure with feedback from their respective areas. This effort is to become more resilient overall as a state and rely a little less on federal post-disaster mitigation for our watershed and drainage needs. The region's coordinating entity is tasked with vetting these recommendations locally.



Provisional Governance Recommendation Path



1st Governance Exercise

2nd Governance Exercise

3rd Governance Outcomes

What is the work?

- Root cause analysis
- Identify the need for regional roles, responsibilities, authorities

Who does it?

- Consider opportunities
- Building consensus around solutions

How?

- Recommendation for Coalition structure
- Action items for implementation



Recent and ongoing RSC activities



Provisional recommendations

Outreach and engagement

Refined recommendations

An iterative planning process requiring vetting and revisiting recommendations

November – January

Make recommendations based on best available data, practices, expertise and information

January – April

Engage parish leadership, stakeholders and the public to gather feedback

May – June

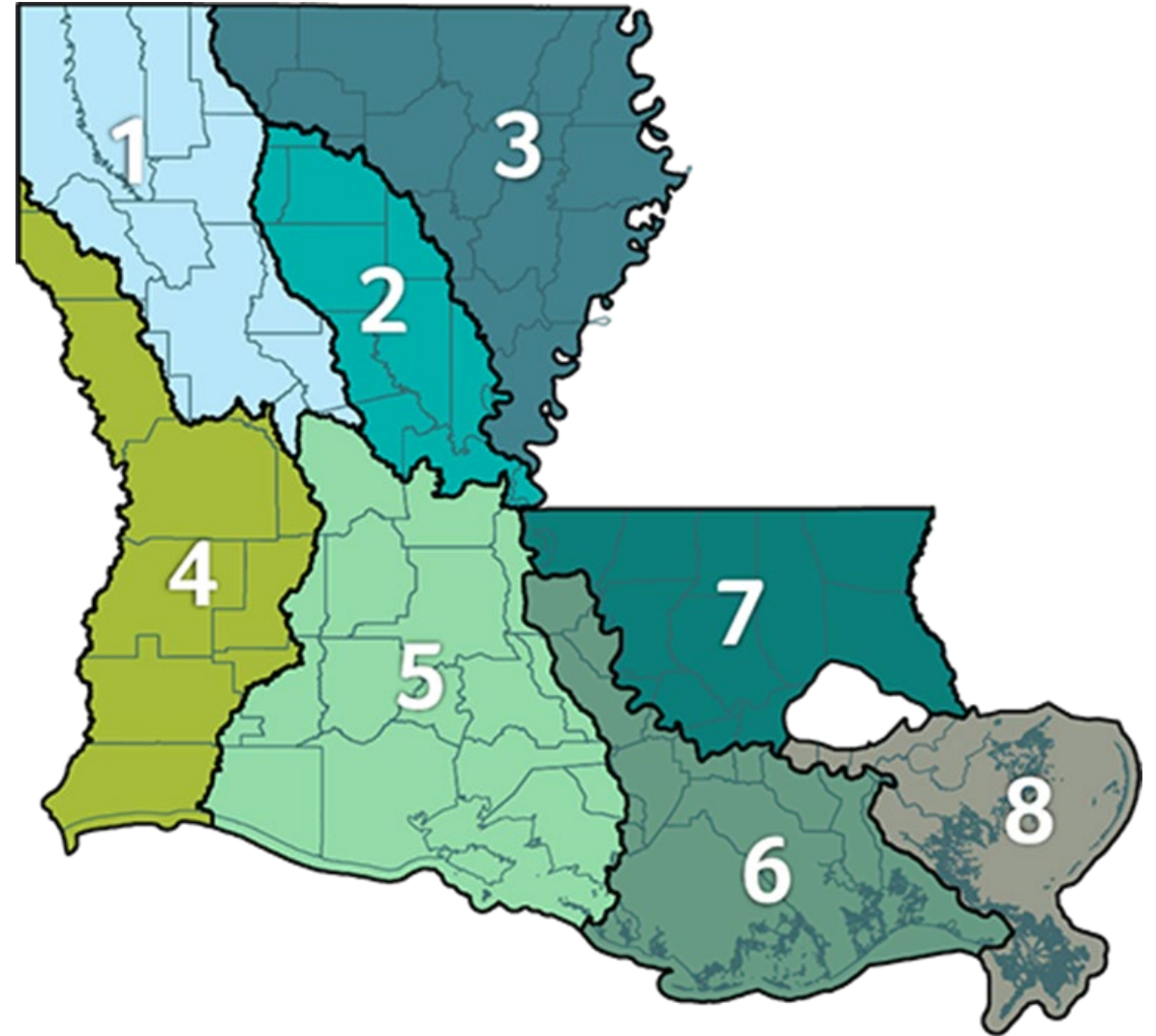
Consider feedback from outreach and engagement and refine recommendations



Provisional regional recommendations

Focus on supporting long-term regional watershed management activities and include:

- Potential roles and responsibilities
- Authorities
- Composition
- Facilitation
- Process for implementation



Region 5

RECOMMENDATION – PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATION

Planning & Development: Roles and Responsibilities “THE GAP IN SERVICES”

EXISTING CONDITION	PROPOSED SOLUTION
Lack of identified watershed project priorities “Regional Projects”	Develops watershed/hazard mitigation plan
5 communities out of ~72 participating in the CRS program, higher insurance premiums, lack of capacity among communities to manage CRS eligible activities	Develop a regional Community Rating System strategy and best practice
Inconsistent development standards, impact of adverse development on real estate values and insurance, higher standards perceived as a deterrent of economic development activities	Promote consistent watershed-based floodplain management policies -state sets minimum standards
Project modeling is typically confined to a political jurisdictions and the limitation of existing models to verify true impacts of watershed projects	Adopt a regional watershed-based permit and permitting process



Region 5 RECOMMENDATION – PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Planning & Development: Roles and Responsibilities “THE GAP IN SERVICES”

EXISTING CONDITION

Parishes plan for projects after a disaster strikes and are often dependent on state and federal funds. Limited coordination occurs among parishes within a HUC 8 watershed and limitations exist for ensuring no adverse impacts on neighboring parishes.

Limited resources and capacity inhibit rural areas from seeking external funding sources. These same funding sources often do not contribute to operations and maintenance of existing projects.

Minimal to no local funds are generated for project planning and technical (engineering) assistance.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

Coordinate with local entities to plan and fund regional projects; the Coalition becomes a clearinghouse for projects impacting the watershed.

Find supplemental funding for projects and support for the implementation of projects; Assist local jurisdictions in funding long-term operations and maintenance of existing projects.

Provides technical and financial assistance to local jurisdictions in the development of project plans



Planning & Development: Roles and Responsibilities “THE GAP IN SERVICES”

EXISTING CONDITION	PROPOSED SOLUTION
Lack of regional watershed models to make data-driven watershed management decisions. Workforce development- Limited exposure to water-science careers among young professionals.	Local/Regional (Decentralized) Model Use, Storage and Maintenance (MUSM)
No local funding mechanism to support regional watershed modeling scenarios, model storage, and future model calibrations.	The Coalition would financially sustain MUSM and make it publicly available
Need for improved water science tools within our riverines and tributaries that enhance future model calibration and contribute to flooding alerts that generate near to real time data for emergency response purposes.	Operate and maintain a regional gauge network



Planning & Development: Roles and Responsibilities “THE GAP IN SERVICES”

EXISTING CONDITION	PROPOSED SOLUTION
Lack of knowledge about the NFIP Community Rating System program and the benefits of participation within the program.	Public awareness campaigns to promote best practices for development and CRS participation
Limited resources and capacity dedicated to CRS participation and/ or obstacles preventing communities from entering the program.	Provide oversight and management of a CRS User Group
Nearly 400 entities exist within LWI Region 5 with some level of water management responsibility and little coordination exists on common goals for water management improvements. Inner-parish coordination will improve regional cooperation and advocacy for regional needs.	Support and promote inner- and intra- parish collaboration among municipalities, local drainage districts, and other entities involved in the watershed for effective watershed management



Region 5

RECOMMENDATION

Authorities

Recommended Authorities for the Coalition

- Authority to cooperate or contract with other governmental agencies
- Authority to generate revenue (e.g., issue/sell bonds, borrow money or accept grants, collect fees, levy tax/special assessments)
- Authority to oversee regional planning processes
- Authority to issue permits



Region 5

RECOMMENDATION

Long-Term Financial Sustainability

Top Recommendation from the “LWI Strategies for Funding Watershed Management and Flood-Risk Reduction in Louisiana” (White Paper), Author: Stephen C. Picou, Adaptation Strategies

- **Stormwater Fees**
 - Most equitable; Funds go directly to the management of runoff
- **User Fees - funds paid to gain access to a service (e.g., groundwater extraction)**
- **Carbon Pricing/Trading Market**
 - Reduces greenhouse gas emissions by passing the cost to the emitter
 - Water users with high pollution reduction costs can purchase pollution reductions from sources with lower costs



Region 5

RECOMMENDATION

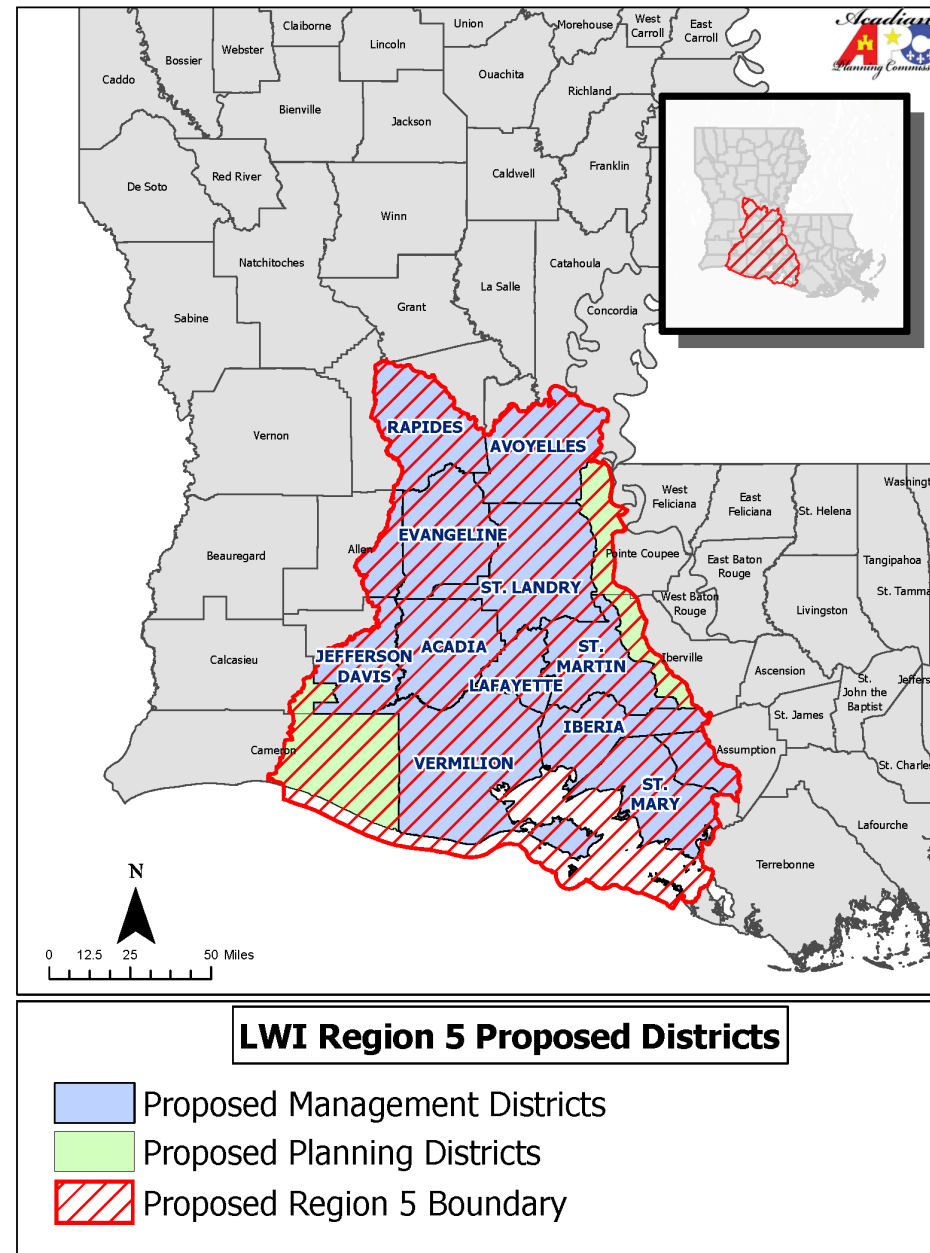
Coalition Composition and Facilitation

The **Acadiana Planning Commission**, is recommended as the “agency” and/or staff of the R5SC and would be responsible for facilitating all meetings of the Coalition and perform administrative functions related to the work of the Coalition. Through cooperative agreements, the following work will also be performed on behalf of the district.

1. UL LA Watershed Flood Center – assist the Coalition in Model Use Storage and Maintenance, data analytics, project modeling scenarios, and general water science needs.
2. Teche-Vermilion Fresh Water District- assist with coordination, operations, and maintenance of the Coalition gauge network and general water quality efforts.



Region 5 Provisional Boundary



Project Contact: Rachel, Kelia, Kade



Future Region 5 Watershed Coalition

- Comprehensive study of regional watershed data
- Utilize State Watershed Model on a regional scale
- Recommend projects that will incorporate a holistic, regional approach and beneficial outcome
- A regional coalition will be enabled and chartered by the State to:
 - Generate long-term sustainable, local and alternate funding
 - Plan and implement projects for natural disasters
 - Develop response plans and have the indemnified authority implement said plans



Next Steps

➤ July

Final governance recommendations will be presented to the Council on Watershed Management.

➤ July 2021 to May 2022 (Second Phase of Outreach Meetings)

Update regional stakeholders on final recommendations and important LWI program updates along with introducing legislative strategies.

Potential Topics: Enablement steps for coalitions, Reducing flood risk through resilience practices and development standards, Data and Modeling processes, Nature-Based Solutions for flood mitigation, and other program goals.



For More Information:



Visit: <http://planacadiana.org/watershed/>

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