

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Departmental Review for Innovation and Visionary Enhancement (DRIVE)* Initiative, authorized under *Executive Order JML 24-13* by Governor Jeff Landry, represents a transformative and ambitious step forward in Louisiana’s approach to natural resource management. This initiative seeks to modernize, optimize, and align the Department of Energy and Natural Resources (**DENR**), creating a framework that is both sustainable and adaptable to the complex challenges of managing Louisiana’s critical resources.

KEY OBJECTIVES

By fostering innovation, collaboration, and fiscal responsibility, the DRIVE Initiative positions Louisiana as a national leader in resource stewardship.

- ***Rebranding to Department of Energy and Conservation:*** The proposed name change highlights a dual commitment to energy management and environmental stewardship, signaling a new era of resilience and sustainability.
- ***Re-Establishment of the Natural Resources Commission:*** This governance structure aims to streamline decision-making, reduce redundancies, and enhance interagency collaboration, ensuring that Louisiana’s natural resources are managed efficiently and cohesively.
- ***Operational Clarity and Modernization:*** By redefining roles and responsibilities, integrating state-of-the-art IT systems, and fostering a culture of proactive innovation, the DRIVE Initiative aims to increase efficiency, accountability, and effectiveness across all levels of the department.
- ***Fiscal Responsibility and Sustainability:*** Employ advanced practical budgeting methodologies and predictive analytics to optimize the use of public funds, ensuring that Louisiana remains fiscally responsible while addressing systemic challenges.

New Entities and Programs

The DRIVE Initiative proposes several new programs and legal entities, as well as changes in assigned duties and tasks amongst existing offices. Several of the proposed changes are highlighted below.

- ***Creation of Upland Restoration and Management Authority:*** This new entity will focus on non-coastal flood protection, risk reduction, and restoration, mirroring the success of the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority in coastal areas.
- ***Expansion of Chief Resilience Officer Role:*** This position will lead statewide coordination on flood risk mitigation, integrating efforts across agencies for comprehensive resilience planning.
- ***Natural Resources Steering Commission:*** A permanent commission established to provide strategic oversight, foster interagency collaboration, and ensure alignment of statewide resource management strategies.
- ***Centralization of Academic Support at the Institute for Energy and Conservation:*** Focused on research, technological advancement, and public

engagement, the IEC will serve as a hub for innovation and collaboration in energy and resource management.

- ***Development of Saltwater and Oil Assessment Process:*** A framework to systematically assess and manage saltwater resulting from commercial operations, including but not limited to, oil-related environmental impacts.
- ***Water Resources Management Program:*** A strategic initiative aimed at sustainable management of Louisiana’s groundwater and surface water resources.
- ***Consolidate Power Generation Strategies:*** Innovative approaches to enhance energy security, optimize generation capacity, and promote renewable energy development.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Louisiana’s legacy in natural resource management is both storied and significant. From the establishment of the Natural Resources Commission in 1908, creating the Department of Conservation in 1912, to the groundbreaking Louisiana Conservation Act of 1940, the state has long been at the forefront of innovative resource management practices. However, contemporary challenges and shifting economic pressures require a bold and forward-thinking approach. The DRIVE Initiative builds on this legacy, advancing a governance framework that is agile, integrated, and responsive to the state’s evolving needs.

The legislature laid a foundation for sustainable resource use through the Natural Resources Commission in 1908 and Department of Conservation in 1912, but over a century has passed, and today we see an increasing focus on balancing economic development and preservation. This initiative not only honors that history but seeks to elevate it by integrating modern technologies, data-driven strategies, and cross-agency collaboration to address today’s complex challenges.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

- Strengthened resilience to environmental and economic challenges, ensuring that Louisiana remains prepared to adapt to unforeseen circumstances.
- A unified and integrated approach to resource management that minimizes redundancies, promotes interagency cooperation, and streamlines operations.
- Increased public trust through transparent governance and active stakeholder engagement, ensuring that all voices are heard and incorporated into decision-making processes.
- Position Louisiana as a leader in innovative resource management practices by ensuring State policy priorities align to meet practical challenges, federal actions, and reacting to the needs in regional, national, and global markets.

By achieving these outcomes, the DRIVE Initiative not only addresses current inefficiencies but also lays the groundwork for a sustainable and prosperous future for Louisiana’s natural resources and the communities that depend on them.

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

Louisiana’s natural resources—oil, gas, water, lands, and coastal ecosystems—are central to its economic vitality and environmental health. The Departmental Review for Innovation and Visionary Enhancement (DRIVE) Initiative represents a critical opportunity to recalibrate the state’s governance structures, addressing longstanding inefficiencies and fragmented systems that have hindered effective management. By uniting a diverse array of stakeholders and employing data-driven strategies, the initiative seeks to create a more cohesive and responsive framework for resource management.

VISION

A reimagined Department of Energy and Natural Resources, as the new Department of Energy and Conservation (DEC), embodies sustainability, innovation, and operational excellence, ensuring that Louisiana’s natural resources are preserved and leveraged responsibly for the benefit of all.

MISSION

To achieve a harmonious balance between economic development and environmental preservation, safeguarding Louisiana’s natural resources for current and future generations.

APPROACH

The DRIVE Initiative has employed a comprehensive and robust methodology to ensure its recommendations are both actionable and impactful.

Key components of this approach include:

- **Historical Insights:** Leveraging over a century of resource management experience, from the Conservation Commission’s early days to the establishment of modern regulatory frameworks.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Actively involving a broad range of stakeholders, including government agencies, industry leaders, environmental groups, and local communities, to ensure diverse perspectives inform policy development.
- **Data-Driven Strategies:** Utilizing cutting-edge analytics and advanced technologies to identify inefficiencies, predict future challenges, and design effective and sustainable solutions.
- **Unified Governance:** Central to the initiative is the creation of the Natural Resources Commission, a body designed to coordinate agency efforts, streamline decision-making, and foster greater transparency and accountability.

By integrating these elements, the DRIVE Initiative aims to position Louisiana as a national leader in natural resource management, demonstrating that economic growth and environmental stewardship can coexist in a balanced and mutually reinforcing manner.

CHAPTER 2 - STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

2.1 CLARIFYING AUTHORITY

Undertake a comprehensive revision of statutes and regulations to align them with evolving departmental objectives and establish a resilient legal [framework](#). This initiative prioritizes inter-divisional coordination and the elimination of redundancies, thereby enhancing clarity and operational effectiveness. Furthermore, it aims to build a legal framework capable of adapting to rapid technological advancements and evolving environmental policies.

ACTIONS

- *Conduct* an exhaustive audit of current statutes to identify and resolve areas of conflict, ambiguity, or obsolescence. Special emphasis will be placed on aligning state laws with federal mandates to ensure seamless compliance and operational coherence.
- *Engage* with legal scholars, policy experts, and diverse stakeholder groups to inform rulemaking initiatives that are both inclusive of feedback and pragmatically implementable. Integration of diverse stakeholder perspectives will produce robust, forward-thinking regulatory solutions.
- *Develop* a robust framework for statutory interpretation, providing guidance on the consistent application of revised laws and regulations to support long-term adaptability. This framework will include detailed manuals and training sessions to ensure uniform understanding and application across all levels of governance.

OUTCOME

The establishment of a cohesive legal architecture that not only facilitates seamless operational integration but also fosters resilience and adaptability. This framework ensures the department is equipped to address future challenges with precision and efficiency, positioning Louisiana as a leader in natural resource management.

2.2 NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

The Natural Resources Commission (NRC)¹ will operate as a high-level advisory entity analogous to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) of the United States. Its primary function will be to guide

¹ The commission, named the "Natural Resources Commission," draws inspiration from the first Louisiana commission for natural resource conservation, chaired by State Representative Thornton from Shreveport in 1908. This historical commission, composed of seven ex officio members, highlighted the necessity for a Department of Conservation in its 1912 report. Its recommendations laid the foundation for Act 127 of the 1912 Regular Session, spearheaded by Mr. Buie. Additionally, earlier legislative efforts, including Act 144 of the 1908 Regular Session and Act 172 of the 1910 Regular Session, established frameworks for conservation oversight. These historical milestones inform the legacy and guiding principles of the current initiative.

strategic decision-making processes in natural resource governance by synthesizing insights from leadership, middle management, regulatory entities, and external stakeholders. By adopting a participatory approach, the NRC will ensure that evidence-based practices inform its frameworks, fostering transparency and accountability.

KEY PRIORITIES INCLUDE

- *Developing* a structured communication strategy to ensure transparency in policy formulation and execution. This strategy will employ advanced digital platforms for disseminating information and gathering real-time feedback from stakeholders.
- *Establishing* iterative mechanisms for public engagement through forums, workshops, and consultations that integrate inter-agency perspectives. These engagements will be designed to maximize accessibility and transparency, ensuring input from all affected communities.
- *Crafting* adaptive governance models that address immediate priorities while building capacity for long-term resource stewardship. These models will incorporate scenario planning and predictive analytics to anticipate and mitigate potential challenges.

The proposed commission model introduces a dedicated commission that will hold quarterly meetings focused on programmatic and functional oversight, replacing temporary committees or task forces.

This dynamic and transparent governance model will enable the NRC to embed diverse perspectives into strategic initiatives, thereby aligning operational goals with broader strategic objectives. The NRC will also serve as a central hub for cross-agency collaboration, ensuring that all stakeholders are aligned in their efforts to manage Louisiana’s natural resources sustainably.

MEMBERSHIP

The commission membership will include the chief executives of their respective agencies, ensuring that each agency’s priorities are represented. For statewide flood control interests, the member would be the chief executive of either DOTD, CPRA, or URMA, as appointed by the Governor. The Natural Resources Steering Commission (NRSC) recommended this cross-functional commission to enhance efficiency and coordination across agencies related to energy and natural resource management. The commission will consist of seven voting members, each representing a key agency or function essential for an integrated natural resources governance system.

The proposed seven seats on the Natural Resources Commission will be designated for the following agencies, without the ability to proxy: the Department of Energy and Natural Resources, Louisiana Economic Development, the Department of Environmental Quality, the Department of Revenue, the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the Public Service Commission, and a representative for

statewide flood protection interests. This structured, high-level composition supports the DRIVE Initiative's goal of an integrated, collaborative approach to managing Louisiana's natural resources.

RESPONSIVE BY STATUTE

The commission will provide continuous oversight, ensuring a structured, ongoing process to address emerging challenges, oversee projects, and ensure transparency in natural resource management. It will streamline communication with the legislative branch, allowing formal discussions and resolution of legislators' concerns. Additionally, the commission would, in theory, replace all task forces, boards, and commissions designed to manage natural resources activities under the authority of DEC, except for the State Mineral and Energy Board (the "Mineral Board"), or reduce the need for such task forces, boards, and commissions to manage future challenges. However, this Commission is not designed to replace existing boards and commissions outside DEC, such as the CPRA Board, LDWF Commission, or other such entities. It will allow for review of areas of concern in an open public forum at regularly scheduled meetings for issues not currently addressed.

The commission will operate under clearly defined goals, tasks, and reporting guidelines, formally assigned by both the legislative and executive branches, ensuring alignment with state policy and accountability at the highest levels. Institutionalizing this oversight within a permanent commission will create a proactive, transparent, and collaborative framework for managing Louisiana's natural resources.

The commission provides a forum for strategic allocation of resources by coordination, supporting long-term planning focused on future challenges rather than only immediate concerns. It will allow the agency to make optimal use of its staff's varied skills and perspectives, driving innovation and resilience across departments. This includes developing cross-agency short-term projects that expand knowledge of agency operations.

The commission will emphasize structured public participation to build trust and encourage ongoing improvement. Its flexible structure will incorporate mechanisms for public input without the burden of numerous task forces, promoting public trust and allowing the agency to integrate community goals effectively while maintaining efficiency and clarity in responsibilities. This approach builds a resilient organization, fostering ongoing improvement through constructive public involvement.

The commission's composition will consist of seven members, each representing different departments or statewide interests in energy and natural resources. The commission's benefits will include strategic coordination and creating a platform for direct public engagement with the executive branch. Thus, the commission can function as a centralized clearinghouse for future issues necessitating executive branch action or review, effectively replacing ad hoc task forces with a more structured and systematic approach. The enabling legislation will include clear roles, meeting requirements, and direct public reporting

pathways. This commission is a cornerstone of the DRIVE Initiative and instrumental in building a modern, responsive natural resources management structure.

2.3 OPERATIONAL CLARITY

To enhance clarity and efficiency, the department has delineated three critical tracks, each designed to address specific aspects of governance and operational management:

THREE AREAS OF FOCUS – OPERATIONAL CLARITY

LAWS	PEOPLE	BUDGET
<p>Programs and Functions</p> <p>Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Statutes and regulations supporting strategic goals. <p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Define statutory and regulatory expectations for roles.Establish guidelines aligning duties with departmental objectives. <p>Outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Enhanced legal compliance and consistency with strategic goals.	<p>Management Track</p> <p>Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Task assignments, expertise mapping, and review processes. <p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop job descriptions detailing tasks, skills, and authority.Implement structured review mechanisms for performance clarity. <p>Outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Consistent execution of responsibilities and alignment with expectations.	<p>Operations</p> <p>Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Defining scope of responsibilities and contributions to strategic goals. <p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Align individual roles with department-wide objectives.Update job descriptions to emphasize operational clarity and efficiency. <p>Outcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Improved operational efficiency and accountability across the organization.

PROGRAMMATIC TRACK

- *Align* departmental mandates with regulatory and legal responsibilities to ensure consistency and accountability. This alignment includes defining explicit roles for each department and creating comprehensive policy frameworks that support streamlined decision-making.
- *Institute* specialized training programs to elevate technical and regulatory expertise among personnel, fostering a culture of continuous professional development. Training initiatives will be tailored to address emerging challenges in natural resources use, energy, water management, and environmental preservation.

MANAGEMENT TRACK

Construct comprehensive task matrices and delineate roles across all managerial levels to ensure clarity in responsibilities. This includes the development of dynamic role maps that evolve with changing organizational needs.

- *Introduce* performance evaluation guidance for managers to consider job duties, including metrics explicitly designed to measure operational efficacy and strategic alignment. These systems will incorporate both quantitative and qualitative assessments, ensuring a holistic evaluation of performance.

BUDGETARY TRACK

- *Implement* rigorous budgeting protocols that emphasize fiscal discipline and transparency. These protocols will include advanced financial modeling tools to optimize resource allocation and forecast budgetary needs.
- *Leverage* integrated reporting mechanisms to monitor financial performance relative to strategic objectives, facilitating data-driven decision-making. Enhanced dashboards will provide real-time insights into budgetary health and resource utilization.

OUTCOME

Through the integration of these three tracks, the department seeks to achieve enhanced coherence across its operations. This approach ensures that resources are efficiently utilized, roles and responsibilities are unambiguously defined, and all actions align with the overarching mission of sustainable natural resource management. By fostering operational transparency and accountability, these tracks position the department as a model for effective and responsive governance.

CHAPTER 3 – ORGANIZATIONAL RESTRUCTURING

3.1 GOVERNANCE MODEL

The governance model emphasizes flexibility and adaptability, allowing the department to respond to evolving circumstances, including crises, regulatory shifts, and technological advancements.

FLEXIBLE OVERSIGHT STRUCTURES

Dynamic frameworks will be introduced, incorporating periodic reviews to maintain relevance and efficacy. This approach ensures the department remains proactive and prepared for unforeseen challenges, fostering a culture of resilience and innovation.

- **Develop Dynamic Frameworks:** Create governance structures adaptable to changing circumstances, including crises, regulatory shifts, and technological advancements.
- **Periodic Reviews:** Introduce periodic governance evaluations to ensure relevance and efficacy.

A key component of these dynamic frameworks is their ability to respond to external factors, including federal regulations, funding opportunities, and intergovernmental mandates. By establishing a centralized oversight mechanism, the department ensures timely and effective responses to federal overreach when inconsistent with Louisiana policies. By creating an intrastate forum, regular communication channels amongst agency heads ensuring consistent action in response to federal agencies, enabling all departments to advocate for Louisiana's unique needs while maintaining compliance with federal standards.

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

At the center of this model is the NRCNRC), briefly described in Section 1.2. The NRC is a centralized seven-member body tasked with overseeing energy and natural resource management. This commission will streamline coordination and decision-making processes, ensuring accountability and alignment with the state's strategic objectives. By consolidating oversight under a singular entity, the commission will eliminate redundancies, enhance inter-agency collaboration, and provide a unified direction for managing Louisiana's resources.

Centralized Oversight

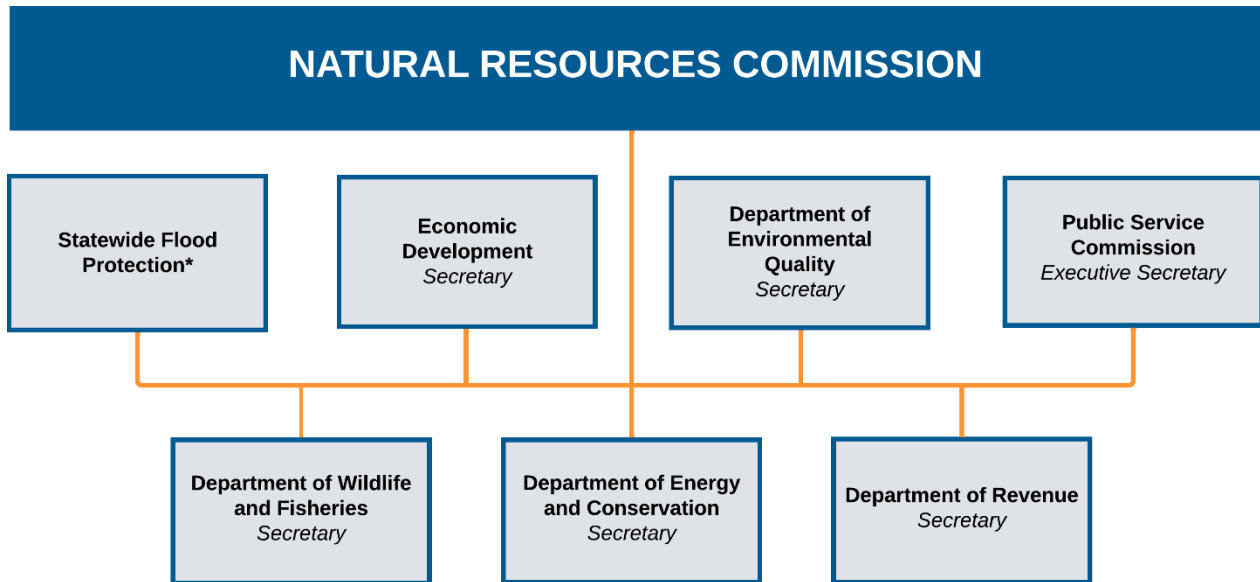
The proposed commission model introduces a dedicated commission that will hold quarterly meetings focused on programmatic and functional oversight, replacing temporary committees or task forces. The commission, named the "Louisiana Natural Resources Commission," is inspired by the first commission for the conservation of natural resources, chaired by State Representative Thornton from

Shreveport, Louisiana, in 1908. This historical commission, consisting of seven ex officio members, ultimately reported the need for a Department of Conservation in 1912, providing a legacy of conservation oversight to inform the current initiative.

This new commission will oversee energy and natural resource management, ensuring streamlined coordination and decision-making. It will be supported by the Office of the Natural Resources Commission, led by the Deputy Secretary of DEC, a statutory position dedicated to ensuring that resources are allocated effectively to establish an agenda and stay on top of issues presented. The Deputy Secretary will oversee staffing and operational functions, ensuring that the commission remains responsive and proactive in addressing critical natural resource challenges.

The commission will consist of seven voting members, meeting quarterly, without the ability for proxy, each representing a key state agency or function relevant to Louisiana's natural resources and energy management. The proposed composition is:

- **Department of Energy and Conservation:** Represented by the *Secretary*, providing overarching leadership and policy alignment.
- **Louisiana Economic Development:** Represented by the *Secretary*, to ensure integration of economic considerations with natural resource initiatives.
- **Department of Environmental Quality:** Represented by the *Secretary*, focusing on regulatory compliance and environmental stewardship.
- **Department of Revenue:** Represented by the *Secretary*, addressing financial aspects related to resource management and revenue generation.
- **Department of Wildlife and Fisheries:** Represented by the *Secretary*, ensuring the conservation of biological resources.
- **Public Service Commission:** Represented by its *Executive Secretary*, providing input on energy policy and public utilities oversight.
- **Statewide Flood Protection Interests:** Represented by a *Governor-appointed Chief Executive from CPRA, DOTD, URMA, or the Chief Resiliency Officer*, ensuring focus on water resource management and flood mitigation.



**Represented by one of the following, Secretary of DOTD, CPRA, or URMA*

This structured composition ensures that all critical sectors influencing and impacted by natural resources and energy policy are represented, fostering integrated decision-making and enhanced inter-agency coordination. However, given Louisiana's unique governance structure, there is no centralized representative for these efforts. To address this, the commission must provide flexibility by allowing a dedicated individual to step forward and represent statewide interests without being hindered by the dual office holding restriction. This ensures that coordination and leadership are not impeded by structural constraints, enabling a more seamless and functional approach to managing complex issues.

Defined Roles

Clearly outline responsibilities for commission members, emphasizing accountability and alignment with state objectives. The commission's structure will include mechanisms for periodic evaluations, stakeholder feedback integration, and transparent reporting to foster public trust and institutional integrity.

This commission is also designed to navigate Louisiana's unique governmental structure, where the Attorney General and Public Service Commission operate independently from other executive branch functions. Through support provided by the Office of Natural Resources Commission located in the DEC, commission staff will serve as the primary point of contact for the Attorney General's office to ensure state responses to Federal actions are coordinated through the Commission and the State's standing is effectively preserved. By establishing clear communication protocols and collaborative frameworks, the commission ensures seamless coordination with these entities, mitigating potential barriers caused by structural separation. This setup improves statewide communication, integrates diverse perspectives, and ensures a unified approach to resource management.

Additionally, the commission provides an effective outlet for the Louisiana legislature to express concerns or highlight needs that require multi-agency attention without necessitating the creation of task forces or study groups. By including these issues as agenda items for the commission, subject matter experts can coordinate and provide actionable responses efficiently. This model provides a structured mechanism for legislative requests, alleviating the need for task forces to manage one off issues. This streamlined and responsive structure ensures that resources are directed towards meaningful outcomes rather than redundant studies. The commission's ability to centralize and address complex issues allows for more targeted solutions, reinforcing its role as a cornerstone of Louisiana's governance framework.

Balancing Statewide Services and Local Input

Over the past century, the demands on local governments in Louisiana have increased significantly, particularly as systems such as gas and water have grown in complexity. Municipal-run systems, often operating without profit motivation, struggle with the expertise and funding required to ensure their longevity. The state's historical focus on building infrastructure has not always been matched with adequate support for operational sustainability. This gap has led to inefficiencies and underutilized resources.

To address these challenges, the department's restructuring will encourage regions and parishes to adopt a regionalized approach on issues of shared interest for implementation. This framework reduces overhead costs and eliminates redundancies by pooling resources and expertise. Regional collaboration will ensure that infrastructure projects funded or appropriated by the legislature are not only built but also maintained and operated effectively.

- **Regionalization of Services:** Establish mechanisms to enable parishes and regions to consolidate efforts, reducing overhead and ensuring effective use of state-allocated resources.
- **Support for Expertise:** Provide technical assistance and centralized expertise to help local governments manage complex systems, such as water and gas, that require specialized knowledge to maintain.
- **Sustainability Focus:** Prioritize funding models and governance structures that incentivize long-term planning and operational efficiency over short-term fixes.

Furthermore, the restructuring will create conduits to connect entities established by local governments, such as local community development boards and public finance authorities, with the Natural Resources Trust Authority. By linking these local entities with a state-level authority, the department fosters a collaborative environment where local initiatives align with statewide expertise and investment power. This ensures that infrastructure projects reflect community needs while benefiting from the strategic oversight and funding capabilities of the state.

For instance, leveraging the Natural Resources Trust Authority as a centralized investment hub enabling municipalities to access a responsible party for the necessary resources and technical guidance for sustainable projects, such as levee systems or water treatment facilities. These projects inherently carry local significance—no one is more invested in a levee system than the community it protects. By connecting local stakeholders with the expertise and financial strength of statewide governance, the department aims to enhance the longevity and resilience of critical infrastructure.

The overarching goal is to *connect the dots* rather than *reinvent the wheel*. This strategy harnesses the intrinsic commitment and investment of local communities while integrating the broader capabilities of state-level resources and expertise. Through this approach, Louisiana’s infrastructure systems will not only meet immediate needs but also evolve sustainably to address future challenges.

3.2 DEPARTMENTAL REBRANDING

New Name

Transition to the "DEC" to highlight a renewed focus on sustainability and resource stewardship.

Value Chain Approach

Integrate all stages of natural resource projects, from permitting to decommissioning. This approach ensures seamless transitions between phases, reducing inefficiencies and enhancing overall project outcomes.

Core Principles

The department’s transition to the DEC represents a commitment to sustainability and resource stewardship. This rebranding reflects the adoption of a Value Chain Approach, integrating all stages of natural resource projects, from permitting to decommissioning. Core principles guiding this transition include:

- **Competitive Practices:** Reduce barriers to entry and promote innovation. By fostering a competitive environment, the department aims to attract diverse stakeholders and encourage advancements in technology and methodology.
- **Fiscal Responsibility:** Manage resources cost-effectively with strategic investments. Prioritizing fiscal discipline ensures that public funds are utilized efficiently to maximize impact.
- **Public-Private Partnerships:** Build collaborations with private entities to drive technological advancements and economic growth. These partnerships will leverage private sector expertise and resources to support public objectives, creating mutually beneficial outcomes.

Through this transformation, the department aims to align its operations with modern conservation and economic principles, promoting long-term environmental and economic benefits. The rebranding also reinforces the department’s role as a leader in sustainable resource management, setting a benchmark for similar initiatives statewide.

3.3 INTEGRATED JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Objective



To eliminate confusion across multiple job requirements and ensure job duties align with departmental expectations, the department will work with Civil Service to create relevant job descriptions for the DEC. This effort will ensure roles reflect the expertise needed to attract qualified individuals and appropriately compensate them, aligning job duties with both public and managerial expectations. This

investment in aligning duties with expectations is critical for improving operational efficiency and accountability. Standardizing roles across offices will help eliminate ambiguity and align employee responsibilities with organizational goals.

Actions

The process begins with a department-wide audit to identify gaps and redundancies in current roles. A comprehensive competency framework will then be developed to guide recruitment, training, and performance evaluations, ensuring that employees are equipped to meet evolving departmental needs. Additionally, job descriptions will be regularly updated to reflect changes in priorities and regulatory requirements, fostering transparency and accountability throughout the organization.

- **Department-Wide Audit** – Assess existing job descriptions to identify gaps and redundancies. This audit will involve cross-departmental collaboration to ensure comprehensive coverage and accuracy.
- **Competency Framework** – Develop a framework guiding recruitment, training, and performance evaluation. The framework will define essential skills, qualifications, and benchmarks for success, ensuring consistency in hiring and development practices.
- **Regular Updates** – Revise job descriptions to reflect shifts in departmental priorities and regulatory requirements. These updates will be conducted periodically, incorporating feedback from employees and management to maintain relevance and alignment.

The integration of these practices will enable the department to develop a more cohesive and agile workforce, capable of adapting to the dynamic demands of natural resource management. By aligning job descriptions with organizational goals, the department will enhance operational efficiency and foster a culture of continuous improvement.

Integrated job descriptions will also reflect the department's broader strategic tracks, ensuring alignment with statutes, programmatic goals, and operational clarity:

- **Programs and Functions** (*Statutes*): Clearly define roles around compliance and statutory expectations, ensuring alignment with the department's legislative and regulatory framework.
- **Management** (*People*): Task assignments, expertise mapping, and structured review mechanisms ensure that responsibilities are consistently executed and aligned with public and departmental expectations.
- **Operations** (*Budget*): Emphasize operational efficiency by clarifying how individual roles contribute to achieving department-wide objectives and ensuring resources are allocated effectively.

This multi-faceted approach will align individual roles with the department's strategic goals, reduce inefficiencies, and foster a collaborative and accountable organizational culture.

3.4 DEVELOPING A PROACTIVE APPROACH WITH AN INNOVATIVE CULTURE

A cornerstone of the Department of Energy and Conservation's (DEC) strategic trajectory involves the deliberate cultivation of a proactive and innovative organizational ethos. This comprehensive initiative prioritizes responsiveness, adaptability, and intellectual creativity as integral mechanisms to address the dynamic demands of the state. By embedding these foundational principles into its operations, DEC endeavors to create a milieu conducive to perpetual improvement, robust professional development, and the fortification of long-term institutional resilience.

Management Track: Leadership and Workforce Development

Commitment to Responsiveness and Adaptability

To align with these cultural imperatives, DEC will adopt a strategic recruitment paradigm that prioritizes candidates demonstrating flexibility, creativity, and a resolute commitment to public service. This intentional selection ensures that the workforce remains adept at navigating emergent challenges with precision and efficacy. Such an approach is central to the establishment of a dynamic and responsive organization.

Further bolstering adaptability, DEC will institute advanced training programs specifically designed to enhance resilience and agility among employees. These programs will not merely focus on skills acquisition but will also emphasize cognitive and behavioral flexibility, enabling personnel to thrive amidst systemic and contextual flux. Complementing this initiative, DEC will institutionalize structured feedback mechanisms to facilitate ongoing dialogue, enabling employees to articulate concerns, propose solutions, and participate in shaping organizational objectives.

Exemplary Leadership

Recognizing the pivotal role of leadership in catalyzing cultural transformation, DEC will implement comprehensive leadership development frameworks. Leaders must exemplify the department's core values through transparent decision-making, empathetic engagement, and decisive action. These attributes will be systematically cultivated through targeted programs aimed at enhancing managerial capacity to inspire, mentor, and lead effectively.

Moreover, DEC will institutionalize mentorship structures that facilitate professional growth and career progression. Leadership evaluations will incorporate metrics assessing alignment with cultural values, ensuring congruence between managerial conduct and organizational objectives. By anchoring leadership practices in these evaluative frameworks, DEC seeks to foster an ethos of accountability and excellence.

Programs and Functions Track: Strategy, Innovation, and Communication

Cultivating Key Cultural Principles

The cultural architecture of DEC will be informed by rigorous adherence to industry-standard frameworks, including the *technical track* as a model for cultivating specialized competencies among individual contributors. Such a framework ensures the systematic development of talent aligned with the department's overarching mission. Guiding principles include:

Disagree or Commit: DEC will institutionalize deliberative processes that encourage rigorous analytical scrutiny and collaborative discourse. These processes will integrate short-term exigencies with long-term strategic foresight, thereby ensuring policy coherence and operational sustainability. By fostering environments where diverse perspectives are not only welcomed but actively sought, DEC aims to reinforce the foundation for sound and sustainable decision-making.

Make Room for Introverts: By fostering an environment of inclusivity, DEC aims to harness the cognitive and experiential diversity of its workforce. Initiatives will focus on encouraging feedback through various methods, thereby enriching the decision-making matrix with a plurality of perspectives. Efforts will include mentorship programs, workshops, and structured collaboration sessions to ensure that every team member feels empowered to contribute.

Share Progress, Sharpen the Process: Embedded feedback systems will serve as iterative mechanisms for refining strategies, enhancing communication, and driving innovation. This culture of reciprocal learning will ensure that both successes and setbacks inform future trajectories. Transparent communication and the deliberate sharing of ongoing work will facilitate collective refinement and continuous improvement.

Grit is the Glue: The cultivation of a respectful and collegial workplace will be a strategic priority, recognizing that synergistic collaboration significantly amplifies individual and collective efficacy. By fostering mutual respect, DEC will optimize workforce cohesion and productivity. Team members will be encouraged to prioritize solutions over egos, ensuring that shared goals remain at the forefront of operations.

Innovation Through Learning and Experimentation

To position itself as a vanguard in resource management, DEC will embrace a paradigm of calculated experimentation and iterative learning. Mistakes will be reframed as critical nodes of insight, fostering a culture of continuous improvement. Employees will be empowered to deploy creative problem-solving techniques, leveraging both internal expertise and external collaborations to address complex challenges.

Dedicated innovation teams will serve as incubators for pioneering methodologies and technologies, facilitating cross-divisional knowledge exchange. These teams will be supported by strategic

alliances with academic institutions and industry leaders, ensuring that DEC remains at the forefront of emergent best practices and technological advancements.

Operations Track: Resource Management and Technology

Strategic Resource Management

The judicious allocation of resources is central to DEC's operational ethos. Managers will be equipped with advanced analytical tools to ensure resource deployment is both strategic and impact-driven. This approach not only enhances operational efficiency but also aligns resource utilization with the department's long-term strategic imperatives.

To further optimize resource management, DEC will integrate sophisticated monitoring systems that provide real-time data analytics. These systems will enable precise tracking of resource allocation, facilitating informed decision-making. Additionally, periodic resource audits will ensure alignment with evolving priorities, thereby reinforcing fiscal discipline and strategic coherence.

Moreover, DEC will adopt resource-sharing frameworks to enhance collaboration between divisions, ensuring that expertise and tools are utilized effectively across the organization.

Transparent and Purposeful Communication

DEC's commitment to transparency will be operationalized through meticulously structured communication protocols. These protocols will prioritize clarity, conciseness, and relevance, thereby fostering trust and alignment across the department. By eschewing information redundancy and emphasizing actionable updates, DEC will sustain a well-informed and collaborative workforce.

Leveraging cutting-edge digital platforms, DEC will enhance its communication infrastructure to enable real-time information dissemination and collaborative engagement. Regularly scheduled town hall forums, supplemented by departmental newsletters, will serve as platforms for sharing organizational achievements, strategic shifts, and collective goals.

To foster external trust, DEC will maintain transparent communication channels with stakeholders, ensuring they remain informed about key initiatives and progress.

Leveraging Advanced Technology

Investments in advanced technological infrastructure will underpin DEC's strategic modernization efforts. By integrating state-of-the-art systems, DEC will streamline operational workflows, enhance data-driven decision-making capabilities, and ensure transparency in its stewardship of Louisiana's natural resources.

Regular evaluations of IT infrastructure will ensure its robustness and scalability, aligning technological capabilities with the department's evolving needs. Comprehensive training modules will be

provided to staff, ensuring proficiency in leveraging these systems to enhance operational efficiency and foster innovation.

Additionally, DEC will explore emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and predictive analytics, to stay ahead of industry trends and enhance its operational capabilities.

Maintaining Up-to-Date Key Documents

To institutionalize operational continuity and strategic alignment, DEC will implement a rigorous document management framework. Key documents, including strategic plans, procedural manuals, and organizational guides, will be subject to regular review and iterative refinement. A dedicated team will oversee this process, ensuring that documentation remains contemporaneous, precise, and accessible.

Furthermore, these documents will be seamlessly integrated into DEC's digital platforms, facilitating ubiquitous access for all stakeholders. Training initiatives will underscore the criticality of these resources, reinforcing their role as foundational tools for aligning individual and departmental efforts with strategic objectives.

DEC will also prioritize stakeholder engagement during the development of key documents, ensuring alignment with community and industry expectations.

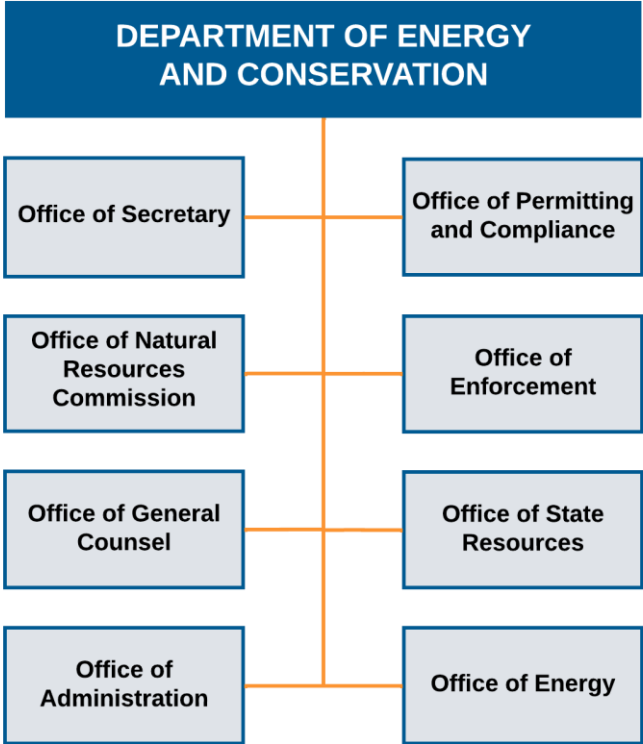
Conclusion

Through the deliberate embedding of these principles, DEC seeks to construct a resilient and innovative institutional architecture capable of navigating Louisiana's complex energy and conservation landscape. This vision is predicated on fostering a proactive culture, marked by responsiveness, collaboration, and intellectual rigor. By adhering to these high standards, DEC will not only fulfill its mandate but also establish itself as a model of excellence in public sector resource management.

This holistic approach ensures that DEC's operational frameworks remain dynamically aligned with its mission and values. By nurturing a culture of adaptability, innovation, and transparency, DEC will sustain its trajectory of excellence, delivering enduring value to the state and its citizens.

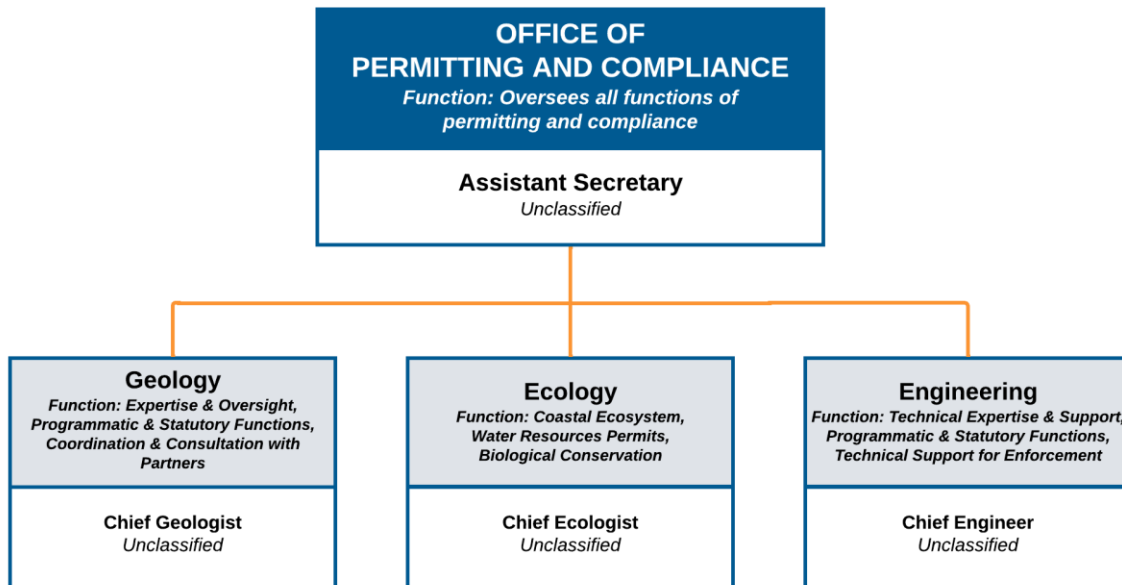
CHAPTER 4 – OPERATIONAL FOCUS AND DEPARTMENTAL OFFICES

This chapter outlines Louisiana’s proposed administrative transformation under Executive Order JML-13 and serves as a roadmap for the reorganization of the DEC, detailing a streamlined approach to departmental operations that ensures enhanced clarity, efficiency, and alignment with the state’s strategic goals. It emphasizes the importance of precise role definitions, integrated responsibilities, and updated job descriptions to eliminate redundancies and foster a culture of accountability. By modernizing the department’s operational framework, Chapter 4 aims to address the complexities of managing Louisiana’s diverse natural resources while enhancing transparency and stakeholder trust. The chapter prioritizes sustainability and resilience by equipping departmental offices with the tools and structures necessary to adapt to evolving environmental and economic challenges.



The chapter introduces a recalibrated governance framework, where each office’s mission and functions are redefined to reflect contemporary priorities. Centralizing operations such as permitting, compliance, enforcement, resource management, and energy planning within specialized offices fosters collaboration and minimizes inefficiencies. Performance evaluation systems, guided by measurable metrics and real-time data integration, will be established to ensure that departmental actions align with broader strategic objectives. With an emphasis on IT modernization, resource optimization, and risk-based prioritization, the chapter underscores Louisiana’s commitment to innovation and efficiency in resource governance. Together, these reforms position DEC as a model of proactive, future-focused management, ensuring that the state’s natural resources are effectively safeguarded and utilized for the benefit of current and future generations.

4.1 OFFICE OF PERMITTING AND COMPLIANCE



The **Office of Permitting and Compliance (OPC)** within the reorganized DEC represents a transformative approach to resource management. Historically, permitting responsibilities were distributed across the Office of Coastal Management (OCM) and the Office of Conservation, creating potential overlaps and inefficiencies. The new centralized structure integrates these functions into a unified framework for permitting processes across both coastal and upland areas. This integration enhances operational efficiency, improves resource stewardship, expedites permitting timelines, and increases transparency for stakeholders. This cohesive approach aligns with the broader goals of the DEC's reorganization, fostering a more responsive and effective regulatory environment for Louisiana's diverse natural resources.

The Office of Permitting and Compliance is uniquely positioned to apply for and achieve primacy for issuing Section 404 permits under the Clean Water Act. Leveraging the extensive expertise of the OCM, which has demonstrated significant proficiency in managing coastal use permits, the office can seamlessly address activities affecting Waters of the United States. The procedural rigor, environmental considerations, and stakeholder engagement necessary for Section 404 permits align with OCM's established practices. By centralizing these responsibilities, the Office of Permitting and Compliance can ensure consistency, streamline operations, and enhance coordination between state and federal agencies.

The office will also handle all public notice, comment periods, and hearing requirements associated with permits, approvals, and regulatory orders. Additionally, it will manage permitting for exploration and

production (E&P) activities, including permits to drill, amended permits to drill, issuance of work permits, and unitization and field orders. The role of conserving mineral and storage resources and the prevention of waste, as mandated by R.S. 30:2 and defined in R.S. 30:3, is central to the office’s mission and will be explicitly addressed.

The OPC will centralize its operations through three core divisions: Engineering, Geology, and Ecology. Each division will play a pivotal role in addressing Louisiana’s critical environmental and infrastructure challenges, fostering collaboration, and advancing the state’s commitment to sustainable resource management. The Geology Division will focus on subsurface operations and the data collected through those operations. The Ecology Division will emphasize environmental protection actions. The Engineering Division will bring operational experience to assess the practicalities of implementation. Each division will be led by a Chief Engineer, Geologist, or Ecologist, ensuring specialized expertise drives decisions and strategies. By integrating cross-disciplinary knowledge, the office ensures that data-driven insights are translated into actionable strategies for resource management. These efforts are vital for ensuring Louisiana’s long-term environmental sustainability and economic stability.

The OPC will also oversee processes related to pipelines that fall outside federal jurisdiction under the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) or the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), not covered under existing state authority. This includes processes related to the approval to construct, interconnect, and abandon intrastate pipelines, including certain longer gathering lines currently exempt from regulation. Pipeline safety regulations, however, will fall under the Enforcement Office. In addition, the Office of Permitting and Compliance will collaborate with the Louisiana Public Service Commission (LPSC) under its transmission and commercial authority to align state regulatory efforts and address operational intersections. By incorporating such oversight into its broader permitting framework, the office enhances transparency, minimizes risks, and fosters interagency cooperation. This reflects the department's commitment to regulatory clarity and proactive resource management.

AUTHORITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The authority for this office stems from various Louisiana Revised Statutes (R.S.) and Louisiana Administrative Code (La. Admin. Code) provisions, which outline the regulatory framework for energy and natural resource management. These statutes and regulations empower the office to lead in permitting and compliance initiatives that adhere to stringent legal and environmental standards. This legal framework provides the foundation for establishing transparent, consistent, and enforceable practices that safeguard Louisiana’s natural resources while fostering economic growth.

- R.S. 30:1 – Establishment of Office of Conservation and authority of Commissioner of Conservation
- R.S. 30:2 – Prohibition of waste of oil and gas
- R.S. 30:3 – Definitions R.S. 30:4 – Authority of the Commissioner – prevention of waste, rulemaking authority, well construction requirements, plugging requirements, financial security requirements, certain pipeline requirements, brine disposal regulation, etc.
- R.S. 30:4.1 -- Authority to permit and regulate hazardous waste underground injection disposal
- R.S. 30:4.3 -- Authority to require financial security
- R.S. 30:5 – Authority over carbon black, gas recycling and unit operations
- R.S. 30:5.1 -- Deep pool wells and ultra deep structure unitization authority
- R.S. 30:5.2 -- Coal seam natural gas producing areas and unitization authority
- R.S. 30:6 – Authority to conduct evidentiary hearings on matters under Commissioner’s jurisdiction
- R.S. 30:6.1 -- Emergency Authority
- R.S. 30:7 – Authority to fix production allowables
- R.S. 30:8 – Authority to issue subpoenas
- R.S. 30:9 – 11.1 – Unit and pooling authority
- R.S. 30:12 -16 – Judicial Review Process, citizen suits, and appeals process
- R.S. 30:19 – Prohibition of sale of illegal gas
- R.S. 30:21 – Authority for fees and other charges
- R.S. 30:22 – 23.1 -- Regulation of underground storage of liquid and gaseous substances
- R.S. 30:25 – closure of production pits in wetlands
- R.S. 30:26 & 28 – Permit authority for E&P wells
- R.S. 30:31 – 34 – Well closure requirement authority
- R.S. 30:41 – Common purchaser law authority for natural gas
- R.S. 30:82-89 – Oilfield Site Restoration Program – Regulation of Orphaned Oilfield Sites
- R.S. 38:3098.2 – Powers of the Department of Energy and Natural Resources
- R.S. 30:550 – Authority Over Intrastate Gas Pipelines
- R.S. 30:901, et seq – Surface Mining Act
- R.S. 49: 214.21, et seq – Coastal Zone Management Program
- Key sections of the Louisiana Administrative Code that support this framework include:
 - Title 43, Part VI – Water Resources Management
 - Title 43, Part XIX – General Operations, including Statewide Order 29-B
 - Title 43, Part XV – Surface Mining
 - Title 43, Part XVII – Underground Injection Control
 - Title 43 Part IX – Natural Gas Policy Act
 - Title 43, Part XI – Pipelines²

² Shared with Office of Enforcement.

→ Title 43, Part VII – Coastal Management

The office will be led by an Assistant Secretary, who will oversee three primary divisions: Engineering, Ecology, and Geology. Each division will be managed by an administrator responsible for overseeing their respective operations. The Assistant Secretary will direct division administrators to collaborate with one another to fulfill the overall mission of the department efficiently. The Assistant Secretary will have overall responsibility for managing the office’s operations and budgeting. This leadership structure ensures the smooth operation of the Office of Permitting and Compliance and its alignment with DEC’s broader goals.

GOALS

- Establish Louisiana as a leader in sustainable permitting practices through innovation and collaboration.
- Reduce risks associated with infrastructure failures by deploying advanced engineering and monitoring solutions.
- Enhance public trust by embedding transparency, accountability, and stakeholder engagement into permitting processes.
- Foster cross-disciplinary collaboration among scientists, engineers, policymakers, and the public to craft balanced and informed resource management decisions.
- Strengthen the integration of policy, science, and operational expertise to create holistic solutions for permitting challenges.

DIVISIONS

The reorganization of the DEC introduces streamlined operations within its core divisions to address Louisiana’s critical infrastructure, environmental, and natural resource challenges. Each division operates with a distinct focus and responsibilities, ensuring specialized expertise drives decision-making and strategic implementation.

Engineering Division

The Engineering Division plays a pivotal role in overseeing Louisiana’s energy and natural resource infrastructure needs, incorporating advanced technologies and strategic partnerships to enhance operational safety and environmental resilience.

Key Focus Areas

The Engineering Division is tasked with addressing oversight of engineering of existing infrastructure, including pipeline safety when needed by Office of Enforcement, reservoir management, and coastal and hydrology engineering. These efforts, in addition to the entire agency, are supported by cutting-edge monitoring technologies, such as automated systems, drones, and artificial intelligence, which provide enhanced pipeline safety and operational oversight. Comprehensive training programs for pipeline safety inspectors are a cornerstone of this division’s mission, ensuring strict adherence to state and federal standards. These programs significantly reduce risks of accidents and environmental damage while fostering a culture of continuous improvement. Furthermore, the division’s work extends to innovative coastal engineering projects aimed at shoreline stabilization, combating erosion, and developing resilient solutions. Flood protection and water resource sustainability are also prioritized through forward-looking planning and strategic implementation of hydrological systems. To achieve these ambitious goals, the division actively builds partnerships with academic institutions and private sector experts, integrating emerging technologies and practices into its strategies to enhance the long-term sustainability of Louisiana’s critical infrastructure.

Leadership and Responsibilities

At the helm of the Engineering Division is the Chief Engineer, who reports directly to the Assistant Secretary. The Chief Engineer’s responsibilities include coordinating and supervising all engineering projects to align with state priorities. This involves assigning tasks, overseeing timelines, and ensuring project objectives are met with efficiency and precision. The Chief Engineer also provides technical expertise to support the entire DEC, ensuring regulatory and operational standards are upheld. Collaboration with external stakeholders—including industry leaders and technology innovators—is vital for integrating best practices and fostering a proactive approach to engineering challenges. By leveraging these

collaborations, the Chief Engineer ensures the division's initiatives align with both immediate needs and long-term state objectives.

Division Structure

- **Reservoir Engineering:** Oversees reservoir management, safety, production well permitting, and engineering functions of unitization and field wide orders.
- **Operations Engineering:** Focuses on injection operations, pipeline construction, tie-in, and abandonment, and waste management.
- **Coastal Engineering:** Encourage coastal zone usage and economic development while using engineering solutions to mitigate impacts.
- **Hydrology Engineering:** For the purpose of permitting, DEC will review flood control systems, water flow engineering, and water resource sustainability.

Geology Division

The Geology Division provides the foundational research and data required for informed natural resource management, focusing on exploration, mining, and groundwater preservation.

Key Focus Areas

The Geology Division is central to advancing resource mapping through the use of GIS, remote sensing, and advanced modeling tools. These technologies enable precise identification and analysis of mineral and groundwater resources, supporting sustainable management strategies. The division actively collaborates with academic institutions, industry leaders, and environmental organizations to foster research in mineral conservation, aquifer protection, and sustainable extraction practices. Geological assessments conducted by the division are pivotal in supporting coastal restoration and sediment management initiatives, mitigating environmental degradation while enhancing ecosystem resilience. Groundwater management is another critical focus, with the division prioritizing strategies that ensure the long-term availability and quality of this vital resource. By establishing a centralized data repository, the division improves transparency and accessibility, facilitating informed decision-making and robust policy development across state agencies and external stakeholders.

Leadership and Responsibilities

The Chief Geologist serves as the division's leader, providing strategic oversight and ensuring that geological tasks align with the broader goals of the Department of Energy and Conservation. This leadership role encompasses managing sections focused on Exploration, Mining, Coastal Geology, and Hydrogeology, ensuring interdisciplinary collaboration and effective integration of geological data into resource management decisions. The Chief Geologist also plays a key role in fostering partnerships with research institutions and industry experts, leveraging these collaborations to enhance the division's capabilities and impact.

Division Structure

- **Exploration:** Manages geological functions of regulating oil and gas exploration, including pooling, unitization, and issuance of field orders.
- **Mining:** Oversees surface mining activities, ensuring compliance and environmental stewardship.
- **Coastal Geology:** Conducts geological assessments in support of coastal zone management.
- **Hydrogeology:** Reviews groundwater permits and compliance issues, focusing on aquifer protection.

Ecology Division

The Ecology Division integrates innovative conservation programs to strengthen biodiversity, adapt to climate challenges, and promote sustainable coastal and other ecosystem resource permitting and regulation under DEC's jurisdiction.

Key Focus Areas

The Ecology Division's mission is rooted in restoring biodiversity and enhancing ecosystem resilience through forward-thinking conservation initiatives. These efforts are achieved through strategic public-private partnerships and adaptive management plans tailored to address Louisiana's unique climate challenges. The division focuses on assisting DEC with restoring degraded ecosystems and protecting native species, ensuring that environmental restoration projects align with long-term sustainability goals. Comprehensive environmental impact assessments are conducted to guide permitting decisions, policymaking and resource allocation, minimizing ecological damage while promoting balanced development. Rigorous ecosystem monitoring programs are implemented to ensure accountability and transparency in all permitting processes, fostering public trust. Public engagement is a cornerstone of the division's approach, achieved through educational initiatives and collaborative trust-building efforts that encourage active stakeholder participation in environmental governance. Furthermore, the division incorporates traditional ecological knowledge into its strategies, enriching conservation efforts and ensuring cultural and environmental integrity.

Leadership and Responsibilities

The Chief Ecologist oversees all ecological initiatives, including tasks related to coastal ecosystems, water resources, and biological conservation. This leadership role involves assisting the division's sections on Coastal Ecology, Hydrology, Biodiversity³, and Environmental Assessment, ensuring that each team's efforts contribute to the division's overarching goals. The Chief Ecologist also champions

³ Given the roles of other agencies in this analysis, specifically the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the DEC will assist in permitting decisions not threatening biodiversity by coordinating, on behalf of the agency, with other state agencies.

the integration of advanced ecological modeling tools into planning and compliance processes, enabling data-driven insights to shape strategic initiatives. By fostering collaboration with external partners and engaging with community stakeholders, the Chief Ecologist ensures that the division remains responsive to emerging environmental challenges and opportunities.

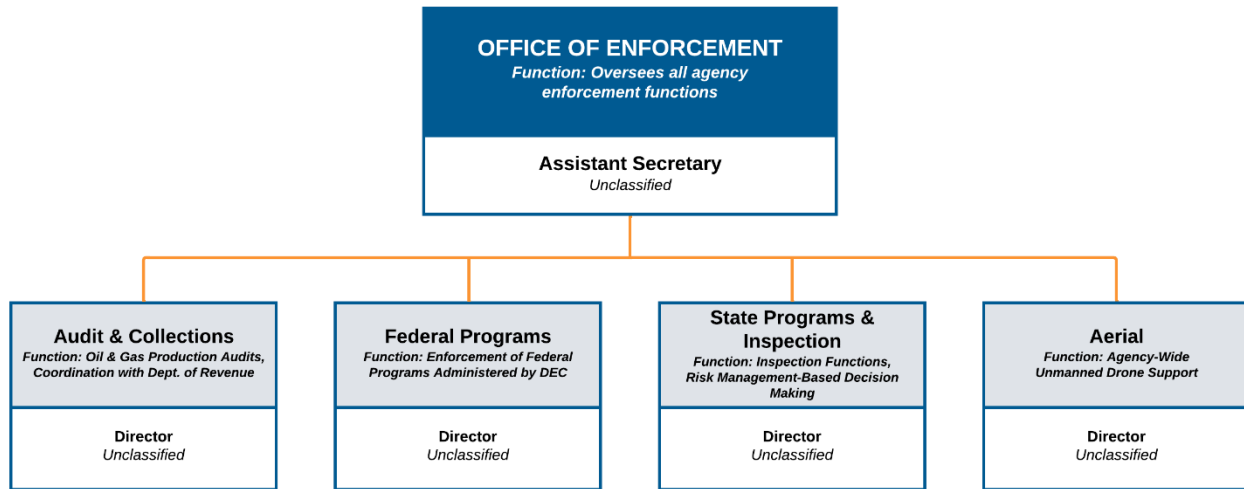
Division Structure

- **Coastal Ecology:** Manages coastal habitat restoration, wetland preservation, and shoreline initiatives.
- **Hydrology:** Focuses on water resources, flood management, and watershed protection.
- **Biodiversity:** Promotes native species conservation and habitat management.
- **Environmental Assessment:** Conducts impact assessments and supports mitigation efforts across projects.

CONCLUSION

By refining the roles and responsibilities of the Office of Permitting through creation of new Engineering, Geology, and Ecology Divisions, the Department aims to improve efficiency, foster innovation, and set a national benchmark for sustainable natural resource management. These divisions ensure the department can respond to Louisiana’s evolving challenges while safeguarding its environmental and economic future. Through enhanced collaboration, strategic planning, and the integration of cutting-edge technologies, the department positions itself as a leader in responsible resource stewardship, dedicated to protecting Louisiana’s natural assets for generations to come.

4.2 OFFICE OF ENFORCEMENT



The Office of Enforcement ensures compliance with state and “federal primacy program” statutes, regulations, and orders under DEC’s jurisdiction through targeted strategies and the integration of advanced technologies. The Office operates to safeguard Louisiana’s natural resources, ensure public safety, ensure proper royalty and other resource related payments, and support responsible operators while addressing violations efficiently.

MISSION & AUTHORITY

To uphold compliance of the Department’s statutory and regulatory requirements through risk-based approaches, leveraging technology, fostering inter-agency collaboration, and ensuring Louisiana’s natural resources and public safety are protected. The Office of Enforcement derives its authority from provisions of the Revised Statutes and Louisiana Administrative Code, including but not limited to:

- R.S. 30:1-3 – General provisions
- R.S. 30:4.2 – Enforcement of wildlife and fisheries laws
- R.S. 30: 6 – 6.1 – Due process procedure, declarations of emergency
- R.S. 30:8 – Subpoenas, service, enforcement of subpoenas
- R.S. 30:12 – 24 – Legal remedies, penalties, underground storage
- R.S. 30:27 – Authorization to enter lands of another
- R.S. 30:32 – 34 – Burning of well, Plugging and Abandonment
- R.S. 30:45 – Enforcement by Commissioner
- R.S. 30:103.2 – Failure to report
- R.S. 30:104 – Failure to report, fine

- R.S. 30:412 – Measure of damages for failure to supply
- R.S. 30:501 – 504 – Natural Resources and Energy Act
- R.S. 30:542 – Administration and enforcement
- R.S. 30:544 – Violation, penalties, civil and criminal
- R.S. 30:560 – 561 – Pipeline Safety and Inspection fees, collection.
- R.S. 30:603 – 606 – Investigations, Hearings, Rehearings
- R.S. 30:704 – 705 – Administration and enforcement, violations, penalties
- R.S. 30:917 – 921 – Inspections & monitoring, Penalties, Enforcement
- R.S. 30:1101, et seq – Louisiana Geologic Sequestration of Carbon Dioxide Act

Key provisions of the Louisiana Administrative Code include, but are not limited to:

- Title 33, Part V, Hazardous Material⁴
- Title 43, Part XI - Pipelines⁵

GOALS

Office of Enforcement is committed to protecting Louisiana’s environment and communities by rigorously enforcing environmental laws and regulations. It seeks to establish accountability by promoting transparency and equitable enforcement practices, ensuring that all operators adhere to clear and consistent guidelines. By prioritizing high-risk operations, the Office allocates resources strategically to maximize impact and efficiency. Furthermore, the Office actively works to enhance public trust in regulatory processes by ensuring that enforcement actions are communicated clearly and executed fairly.

A key objective is to integrate advanced technologies to refine compliance monitoring and risk assessment methodologies. This approach not only strengthens enforcement measures but also enables the Office to anticipate and address emerging challenges effectively. By maintaining open channels of communication with stakeholders on agency action, the Office fosters a transparent regulatory framework that reflects stakeholder perspectives and promotes shared responsibility for Louisiana’s natural resources.

- Safeguard public safety and Louisiana’s natural resources by rigorously enforcing compliance with state and federal-primacy program statutes, regulations, permits, and orders under DEC’s jurisdiction.
- Cultivate a culture of accountability and transparency among operators by offering clear guidelines and fair enforcement practices.
- Utilize data-driven, risk-based approaches to allocate enforcement resources efficiently and target high-priority operations.
- Strengthen public confidence in the regulatory and royalty or resource-related payment processes by ensuring consistent inspection, audit, and enforcement measures and clear communication.

⁴ With respect to pipelines

⁵ Shared with Office of Permitting and Compliance

OPERATIONS AND STRATEGY

The operational framework of the Office of Enforcement is designed to address regulatory challenges comprehensively. By adopting a strategic, multi-divisional structure, the Office ensures that its enforcement efforts are both localized and aligned with overarching policy objectives. The following four divisions form the backbone of the Office's operations:

Audit and Collections Division

Purpose: The Audit and Collections Division ensures that all revenue reporting and collection processes related to oil and gas, energy, storage, and disposal operations on state-owned lands and water bottoms are accurate, efficient, and compliant with Louisiana's legal standards.

Core Activities: This division plays a pivotal role in conducting detailed audits to verify production and other state resource related reporting and payment compliance. Currently, penalties are based upon the length of delay in making the proper payment, it ensures that operators are held accountable for financial obligations. Utilizing blockchain technology and cloud-based systems, the division guarantees secure, transparent data verification. Partnerships with the Department of Revenue will streamline collection efforts, while company audits can address localized discrepancies. The division's educational initiatives, such as operator training sessions, enhance compliance awareness and promote better industry practices.

Strategic Role: The division acts as a financial guardian of Louisiana's natural resource revenues, bridging gaps between regulatory expectations and industry performance. Its efforts not only safeguard economic interests but also reinforce the broader mission of regulatory accountability.

Federal Programs Division

Purpose: The Federal Programs Division will enforce regulations set forth by federal guidelines in which Louisiana has primacy, ensuring seamless integration between state and federal requirements.

Core Activities: The division serves as a liaison between Louisiana's enforcement agencies and federal bodies such as the Department of Transportation – Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). It develops compliance strategies tailored to dual-jurisdictional operations, ensuring that operators adhere to both state and federal regulations. The division also oversees the implementation of regulatory updates across district offices, providing guidance and comprehensive training to ensure consistent enforcement. Collaborative initiatives foster inter-agency alignment, streamlining enforcement efforts across multiple jurisdictions.

Strategic Role: By acting as a conduit for federal collaboration, the division strengthens Louisiana's position as a leader in regulatory innovation and environmental stewardship. It ensures that state-level enforcement aligns with national standards while addressing the unique challenges posed by Louisiana's diverse ecological landscape.

State Programs and Inspection Division

Purpose: The State Programs and Inspection Division oversees district-level enforcement to ensure adherence to Louisiana-specific regulations, addressing local environmental challenges effectively.

Core Activities: This division conducts routine inspections of industrial and operational facilities to identify and rectify instances of non-compliance. It develops annual enforcement reports to evaluate district performance, highlighting areas for improvement and celebrating successes. By equipping district offices with tailored resources and strategies, the division enhances localized enforcement capabilities. Community engagement initiatives address region-specific environmental concerns, fostering transparency and understanding among stakeholders. The division also ensures that referrals of non-compliance cases are handled promptly and effectively, maintaining a consistent enforcement standard across all districts.

Strategic Role: The division's localized focus enables it to respond swiftly to regional challenges while contributing to the state's broader environmental goals. Its efforts strengthen the connection between policy enforcement and community impact, ensuring that Louisiana's natural resources are managed sustainably and responsibly.

Aerial Surveillance Division

Purpose: The Aerial Surveillance Division employs advanced aerial technologies to enhance monitoring capabilities, providing real-time insights into environmental risks and compliance issues.

Core Activities: This division deploys drones and manned aircraft to monitor industrial activities and environmental conditions across Louisiana. High-resolution imaging, geospatial analytics, and thermal imaging are utilized to detect unauthorized discharges, leaks, and other violations. The division supports district offices by supplying actionable aerial data that informs ground-level inspections and enforcement actions. Training programs for district personnel ensure that aerial insights are effectively integrated into broader compliance strategies. Priority is given to high-risk areas, maximizing the impact of surveillance efforts.

Strategic Role: By combining cutting-edge technology with a proactive monitoring approach, the division enhances the Office's ability to prevent and address environmental violations. Its work exemplifies the potential of innovation in strengthening regulatory frameworks and protecting natural resources.

LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The Office of Enforcement is led by an Assistant Secretary, supported by divisional administrators who manage the daily operations of their respective areas. This leadership structure ensures that enforcement activities are coordinated and aligned with the Department's broader objectives. By integrating insights from district operations, the Office maintains a dynamic approach to enforcement that adapts to emerging challenges and opportunities.

The Office adheres to several guiding principles: Risk-based resource allocation prioritizes high-impact areas, ensuring efficient use of resources. Feedback mechanisms, such as regular district evaluations and stakeholder consultations, refine enforcement strategies and identify areas for improvement. Proactive enforcement emphasizes preventive measures, enabling the Office to address potential violations before they escalate. By balancing centralized oversight with localized execution, the Office fosters a comprehensive enforcement ecosystem that protects Louisiana's environment and communities.

Through its robust organizational structure, innovative technologies, and commitment to collaboration, the Office of Enforcement exemplifies excellence in environmental governance. It is not merely a regulatory body but a steward of Louisiana's natural heritage, ensuring that the state's resources are preserved and utilized responsibly for generations to come.

Risk-Based Framework

- Allocate 80% of resources to high-risk operations, focusing on active operational phases.
- Direct 20% of resources to compliance efforts during construction/start-up/modification phases.
- Prioritize inspections based on risk severity, geographic scope, and product type.⁶

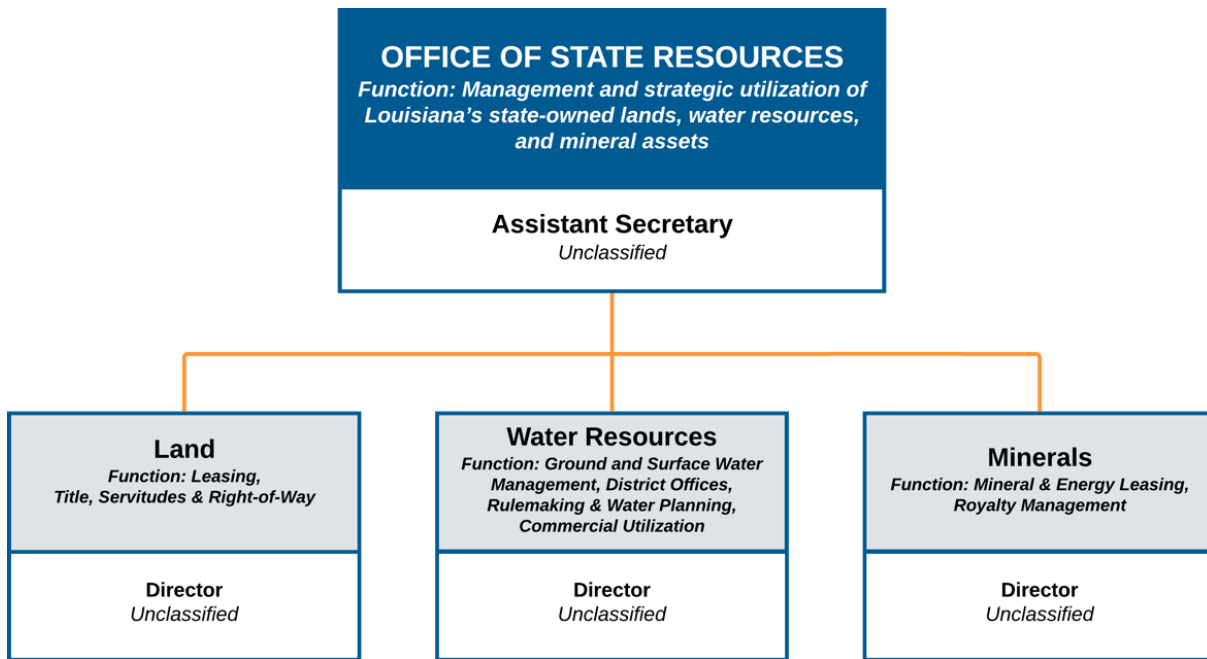
Governance

Public entities often face financial and infrastructural challenges in compliance, necessitating tailored assistance. Private entities, depending on their capitalization levels, experience distinct compliance risks. Further, both may be prone to favor short-term rewards at the potential cost of long-term risks. These nuanced factors should guide the Office's enforcement strategies, ensuring targeted and effective resource allocation.

By integrating advanced technologies, interagency cooperation, and strategic resource management, the Office of Enforcement exemplifies a balanced approach to supporting good operators, addressing violations, and fostering public trust.

⁶ This would be a policy change to prioritize inspections base on risk compared to the five-year time interval in place now.

4.3 OFFICE OF STATE RESOURCES



The Office of State Resources is the central authority for the sustainable management and strategic utilization of Louisiana’s state-owned lands, water resources, and mineral assets. As the location of the proprietary arm of the state’s natural resources management functions, this office balances economic development with ecological and natural resource stewardship, ensuring the efficient management, conservation, and allocation of these critical resources. State interest decisions are directed by the Mineral Board, with this office serving as the operational backbone to support those directives. Its mission includes modeling and understanding resource volumes, monitoring their utilization, and collaborating with the DEC’s other offices to manage resources effectively.

AUTHORITY

The Office of State Resources derives its mandate from a robust statutory and regulatory framework established under the Louisiana Revised Statutes and the Louisiana Administrative Code. These legal instruments empower the office to manage the state’s natural resources with precision and accountability:

- Title 31, the Mineral Code: Provides comprehensive governance of mineral rights and operations.
- R.S. 30:121 et seq: Establishes the role and jurisdiction of the Mineral Board.
- Title 43, Part V: Details operational regulations for the Office of Mineral Resources.

- Title 43, Part VI: Defines policies for water resource management, including specific provisions for groundwater under Subpart 1.
- Title 56, Part I: Regulates water well operations and ensures proper oversight of water utilization.

GOALS

- Generate substantial and sustainable revenue streams through resource leasing and utilization, adhering to rigorous environmental standards.
- Conserve and protect groundwater and surface water resources through innovative management practices and advanced technologies.
- Enhance resource management by integrating comprehensive land, water, and mineral management strategies.
- Ensure reliable and sustainable access to natural resources, promoting benefits that extend across all sectors of Louisiana’s economy and society.
- Establish and enforce a statewide resource management framework to meet current needs while anticipating future challenges.

OPERATIONS

The Office of State Resources is overseen by an Assistant Secretary, who manages personnel, budgeting, and operational priorities across three divisions: Land, Water Resources, and Minerals. Each division is led by an administrator responsible for aligning division-specific activities with the office’s overarching mission and coordinating with other state agencies and stakeholders. This structure enables seamless collaboration and effective resource management to drive economic development while preserving Louisiana’s natural heritage for future generations.

DIVISIONS

Land Division

- *Oversees* the management of state-owned lands and water bottoms, including servitudes, rights of way, leasing activities, and title oversight.
- *Implements* geospatial data analysis and conducts routine audits to ensure sustainable and efficient land use.
- *Develops* public-private partnerships to optimize resource stewardship and revenue generation.
- *Maintains* compliance with all regulations governing land title and usage, ensuring transparency and accountability in asset management.

Water Resources Division:

- *Administers* the management of Louisiana’s groundwater and surface water resources under the authority of Act 727 of the 2024 Regular Session, focusing on sustainable utilization and conservation.

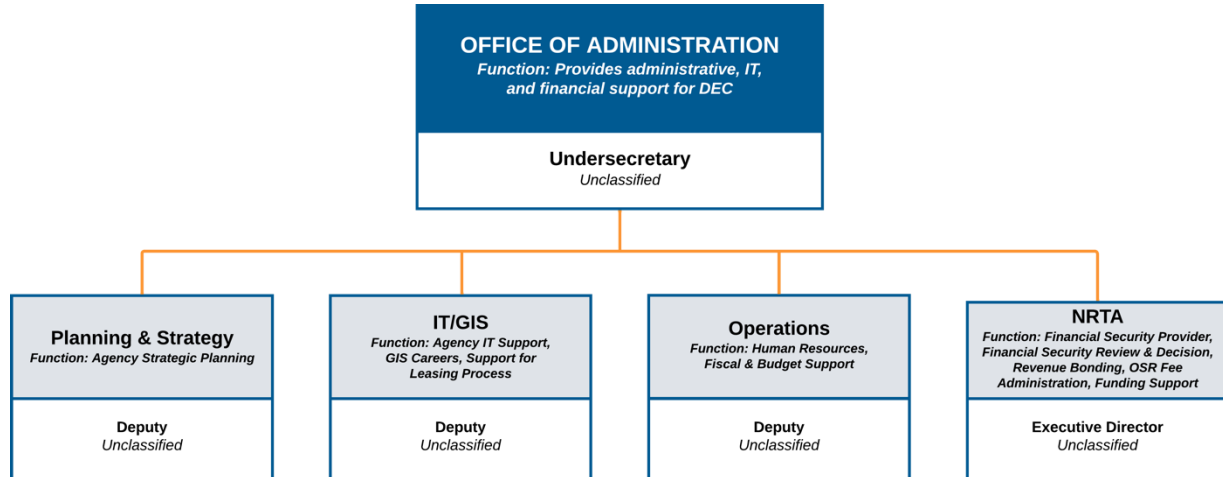
- *Designs and enforces* a comprehensive statewide framework for water resource regulation and strategic management.
- *Oversees* commercial water use, including sales, ensuring practices align with conservation and sustainability goals.
- *Operates* through Surface Water and Groundwater Sections, each led by specialized section managers who address regional and functional priorities.
- *Collaborates* with local districts to delegate water management authority where appropriate, fostering localized, community-driven stewardship.

Minerals Division:

- *Maximizes* economic returns from mineral and energy leasing on state-owned lands and water bottoms, ensuring efficient royalty collection and management.
- *Provides* technical and strategic support to the Mineral Board for leasing operations and energy development initiatives.
- *Implements* certification programs to incentivize sustainable practices among operators and enhance public trust in resource extraction.
- *Streamlines* internal processes to enable responsive and efficient administration of mineral leasing and resource management.

By aligning the expertise and functions of its divisions, the Office of State Resources strives to position Louisiana as a national leader in resource management, exemplifying a model of economic vitality paired with unwavering commitment to environmental stewardship.

4.4 OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATION



The Office of Administration functions as the centralized nexus for all core administrative and strategic operations within the DEC. Under the leadership of the Undersecretary, this office integrates cutting-edge technologies and fosters interdivisional collaboration to enhance operational efficiency, enforce accountability, and align departmental activities with Louisiana’s long-term strategic objectives. By consolidating IT infrastructure, financial management, and strategic planning, the Office ensures the cohesive functionality of all divisions while advancing shared institutional goals. Its role as a centralized hub provides unparalleled support, ensuring that all departmental operations adhere to a unified strategic vision while simultaneously accommodating the dynamic demands of environmental governance.

MISSION:

The mission of the Office of Administration is to provide a robust and structured framework that supports all departmental divisions by:

- Ensuring the effective allocation of financial resources to maximize institutional impact and sustainability.
- Implementing modernized administrative processes to enhance transparency, accountability, and operational efficiency.
- Delivering data-driven insights to inform strategic and policy-level decision-making, enabling precise alignment with departmental objectives.
- Facilitating interdepartmental collaboration to streamline operations, cultivate innovation, and promote adaptive solutions to complex challenges.

- Proactively addressing emerging administrative and operational needs, ensuring resilience and continuous improvement across the department.

AUTHORITY

The Office of Administration derives its authority from Title 36 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes and Title 43 of the Louisiana Administrative Code. Within this structure, the Natural Resources Trust Authority (the “Trust Authority”) exercises rulemaking powers as provided by its enabling statutes, developing governance frameworks to uphold transparency and legal compliance. This regulatory foundation ensures the integrity of all administrative and strategic processes, granting the Office robust oversight capabilities.

OPERATIONS

The Undersecretary oversees the Office of Administration, orchestrating the delegation of responsibilities and coordination of activities across divisions to ensure cohesive governance and efficient decision-making. This involves strategic alignment of divisional functions with departmental goals, fostering an integrated approach to resource management and policy implementation. Each division is directed by an administrator or executive director who reports directly to the Undersecretary, guaranteeing alignment with the Department’s overarching objectives. This structured approach not only facilitates consistent communication and operational coherence but also empowers divisions to specialize and innovate within their respective domains.

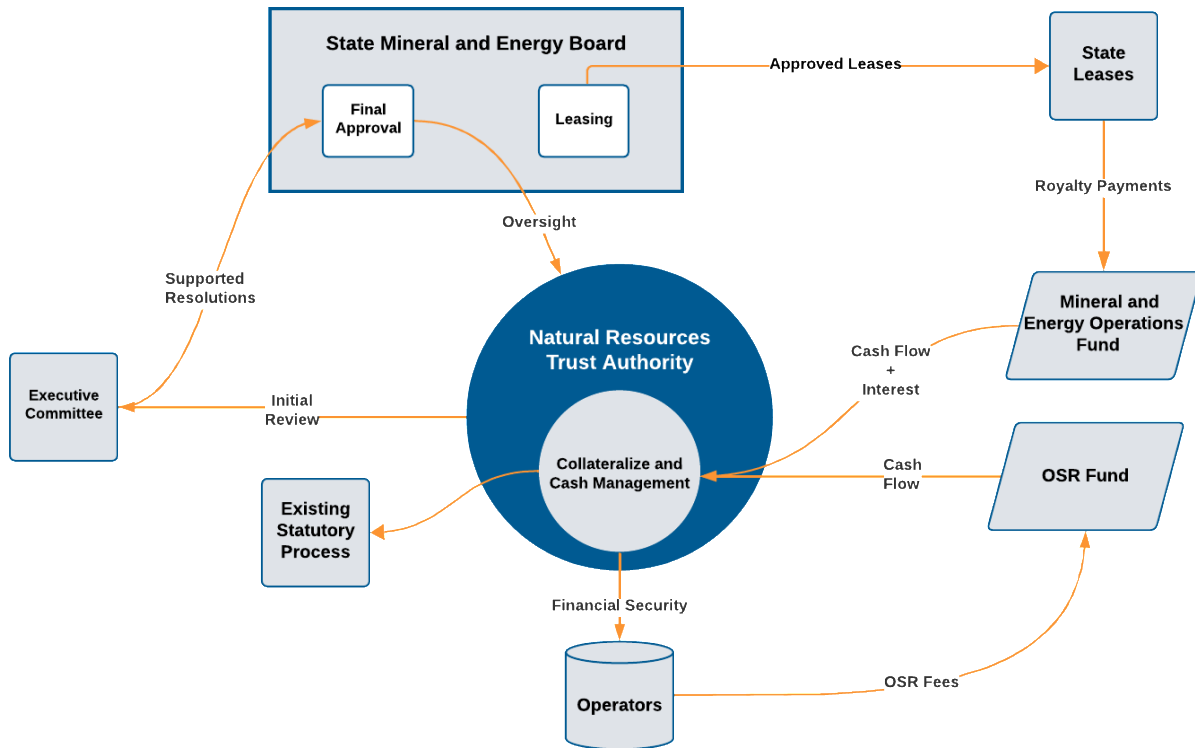
DIVISIONS

Natural Resources Trust Authority

Purpose

Specializes in strategic financial planning and management, leveraging sophisticated financial modeling tools to allocate funding for high-priority initiatives. By employing predictive analytics and scenario-based financial assessments, the Trust Authority ensures optimal allocation of limited resources.

OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATION NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST AUTHORITY



Collaboration

Maintains synergistic relationships with the Mineral Board, State Bond Commission, and Louisiana Department of Treasury, while also pursuing co-financing opportunities with other finance authorities. These partnerships enable comprehensive financial strategies that balance immediate needs with long-term objectives.

Rulemaking & Compliance

Develops regulatory frameworks under the Administrative Procedure Act, engages public input, and conducts audits to ensure adherence to governance standards. The Trust Authority also integrates stakeholder feedback to enhance transparency and inclusivity in financial decision-making.

Planning and Strategy Division

Strategic Alignment

Administers a comprehensive five-year strategic planning framework, modeled on the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority’s (CPRA) methodology of formulating operational plans

independently of funding considerations. This ensures that planning is driven by strategic imperatives rather than constrained by immediate fiscal limitations, fostering adaptability and forward-thinking resource allocation.

Funding Assessment

Post-planning, funding is systematically evaluated and prioritized, allowing for objective resource allocation that aligns with the Department's long-term vision. This phased approach ensures that strategic initiatives are both actionable and sustainable.

Collaboration & Coordination

Streamlines initiatives by synchronizing departmental efforts with external stakeholders, including Louisiana Economic Development (LED). By reducing redundancies and fostering partnerships, the division maximizes operational efficiency and strategic impact.

Technology Division

Technology & Data Analytics

Houses Geographic Information System (GIS) operations, supporting mineral and energy leasing while advancing real-time data analytics and reporting capabilities. These technological innovations enable precise monitoring and optimization of resource management activities.

Cybersecurity & Public Access

Establishes comprehensive cybersecurity protocols to safeguard sensitive data and ensures transparent public access to critical information. The division also pioneers open-data initiatives to enhance stakeholder engagement and public trust.

Innovation and Integration

Develops advanced IT infrastructures to facilitate cross-divisional collaboration and support complex modeling for environmental, economic, and regulatory planning.

Management and Budget (Operations)

Fiscal Oversight

Executes budgetary analysis and long-term financial planning to ensure judicious management of resources in collaboration with the Planning and Strategy Division. By employing advanced forecasting tools, the division anticipates fiscal trends and aligns budget allocations with strategic priorities.

Human Capital Development

Oversees recruitment, workforce development, and talent retention strategies to maintain the expertise necessary for fulfilling departmental objectives. Investment in human resources includes the refinement of job descriptions, active collaboration with Civil Service to address bureaucratic

inefficiencies, and the establishment of professional development programs that align employee growth with organizational needs.

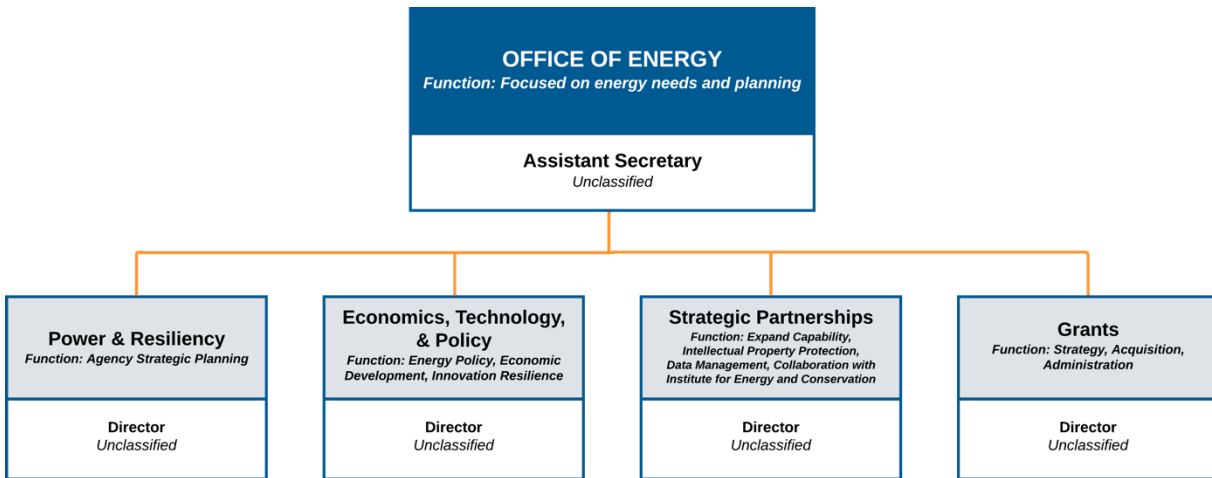
- **Comprehensive Human Resources Strategy** – Prioritizes adaptive workforce planning to meet evolving demands, ensuring that staff expertise is aligned with the department’s strategic objectives. The division also develops performance metrics to evaluate and enhance employee contributions, fostering a culture of accountability and excellence.

GOALS

- **Five-Year Operational Planning:** Establish a robust framework for aligning resource allocation with forward-looking operational strategies, free from immediate fiscal constraints, to ensure adaptability and resilience in addressing emergent challenges.
- **Financial Optimization:** Deploy advanced financial modeling techniques to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of project funding, ensuring that fiscal resources are allocated to areas of highest impact.
- **Administrative Modernization:** Revamp administrative workflows to eliminate redundancies, thereby enhancing transparency, accountability, and operational agility. This includes the adoption of innovative management practices and technological solutions to streamline departmental processes.
- **Data-Driven Governance:** Provide actionable analytics to support evidence-based decision-making and stakeholder engagement. By leveraging comprehensive data ecosystems, the Office ensures that decisions are informed, strategic, and aligned with overarching departmental goals.
- **Interdepartmental Synergy:** Strengthen institutional partnerships to drive innovation, achieve integrated objectives across divisions, and promote cohesive responses to complex challenges. By fostering collaboration, the Office enhances its capacity to address multifaceted environmental, economic, and regulatory demands.
- **Employee Empowerment:** Invest in workforce capabilities through targeted training, professional development opportunities, and resource optimization to ensure that staff can effectively contribute to the department’s mission.

By combining financial stewardship, strategic foresight, advanced technology, and operational excellence, the Office of Administration constitutes the structural and functional backbone of DEC. This ensures that Louisiana’s environmental stewardship and economic vitality objectives are met with precision and foresight. The Office’s comprehensive approach not only addresses immediate operational needs but also lays a foundation for continuous improvement, ensuring that the Department remains a leader in natural resource governance.

4.5 OFFICE OF ENERGY



The Office of Energy endeavors to catalyze Louisiana’s development of a reliable and resilient energy ecosystem, fostering economic advancement while fortifying energy infrastructure against emerging challenges. This mission emphasizes strategic policy alignment, the integration of advanced energy systems, and enduring sustainability. Through innovative policies, robust partnerships, and comprehensive planning, the Office of Energy seeks to position Louisiana as a leader in both traditional and emerging energy systems while addressing both immediate and long-term challenges facing the state.

GOALS

- Establish a diversified energy infrastructure that seamlessly integrates renewable and traditional energy systems to enhance reliability and efficiency.
- Attract significant investments and build robust public-private partnerships to stimulate innovation in energy technologies and foster economic resilience.
- Enhance disaster preparedness and recovery through comprehensive grid modernization initiatives and strategic resilience planning tailored to Louisiana’s unique geographical and environmental needs.
- Cultivate deep community engagement to promote access to energy resources, foster trust in energy sector projects, and support education and workforce development in all energy sectors.

OPERATIONS

The Office operates under the stewardship of an Assistant Secretary, who supervises its key divisions. Each division is led by an administrator responsible for implementing strategic initiatives that align with the department’s overarching energy objectives and policy framework. The Office of Energy leverages interdisciplinary collaboration across its divisions to maximize efficiency and achieve its strategic

objectives, supported by an adaptable framework responsive to technological advancements and evolving market demands.

Divisions

Power and Resiliency Division

The Power and Resiliency Division is responsible for implementing Louisiana’s strategic energy objectives, particularly in power generation, through close collaboration with the Public Service Commission (PSC). Its key functions include advocating for state interests at the PSC to ensure alignment with Louisiana’s energy priorities and influencing regulatory decisions to optimize resource allocation. It is also tasked with expanding renewable energy deployment, focusing on large-scale solar, offshore wind, and advanced nuclear technologies while integrating these sources with existing infrastructure. Additionally, the division collaborates with Louisiana Economic Development to cultivate a regulatory environment conducive to industrial growth, energy innovation, and business expansion. Strategically, it develops and implements policies, in coordination with the Economics, Technology, and Policy Division, to fortify energy infrastructure, enhance operational resilience, and ensure a balanced energy portfolio that supports environmental and economic sustainability.

Economics, Technology, and Policy Division

The Economics, Technology, and Policy (ETP) Division focuses on the intersection of economic growth, technological innovation, and environmental sustainability, fostering the integration of emerging energy technologies into Louisiana’s economic landscape. Its objectives include integrating advanced nuclear energy systems, such as Small Modular Reactors (SMRs), to bolster grid reliability, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and position Louisiana as a pioneer in clean energy innovation. The division promotes workforce development programs tailored to clean energy sector demands, ensuring the state’s workforce is prepared for future challenges. Additionally, it fosters stakeholder trust in emerging technologies through comprehensive outreach programs, public education, and legislative advocacy aimed at reducing misconceptions and promoting adoption. The division is also modernizing grid infrastructure by integrating smart grid technologies, enabling real-time monitoring, efficiency optimization, and enhanced disaster resilience. Further, it develops microgrid projects and encourages industrial co-location to maximize resource efficiency and minimize energy transmission losses, including in underserved or remote regions.

Strategic Partnerships Division

The Strategic Partnerships Division leverages partnerships with academic institutions, industry leaders, and government entities to expand departmental capacities and foster innovation. It focuses on protecting intellectual property and fostering collaborative data-sharing initiatives that support transparency

and innovation. The division partners with entities such as the Water Institute of the Gulf and Center for Energy Studies to enhance resource accessibility, improve grid monitoring capabilities, and advance research in renewable energy integration. It encourages cross-sector collaboration and investment in emerging energy technologies, creating an ecosystem that fosters innovation and shared expertise.

Grants Division

The Grants Division is responsible for securing and administering federal grants to maximize funding opportunities for Louisiana’s energy initiatives, ensuring effective resource utilization to meet strategic goals. It has successfully procured nearly \$1 billion in federal funding to date, supporting a diverse portfolio of projects across renewable energy, grid modernization, and community resilience. This division will establish and pursue a comprehensive strategy for securing federal grant funding that aligns with the state’s strategic goals and supports the mission of the DEC and the Office of Energy. It collaborates with state offices to ensure the effective and timely implementation of grant-funded projects while pursuing additional funding opportunities through innovative financing mechanisms.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The strategic objectives for the department include grid modernization through the development of a comprehensive Critical Infrastructure Plan to enhance grid reliability, incorporate renewable energy technologies, and address vulnerabilities exacerbated by Louisiana’s susceptibility to natural disasters. It also aims to stimulate economic growth and innovation by investing in high-energy-density resources, such as hydrogen and nuclear, to fuel economic expansion alongside traditional energy sources and create new employment opportunities. Sustainability is another key focus, with advocacy for energy-efficient practices across all sectors to reduce environmental impact and lower consumer costs through targeted legislative reforms and operator incentives. Additionally, resilience is emphasized by strengthening the state’s energy infrastructure to withstand extreme weather events, enhance adaptive capacity, and promote access to reliable energy for all communities.

Considerations

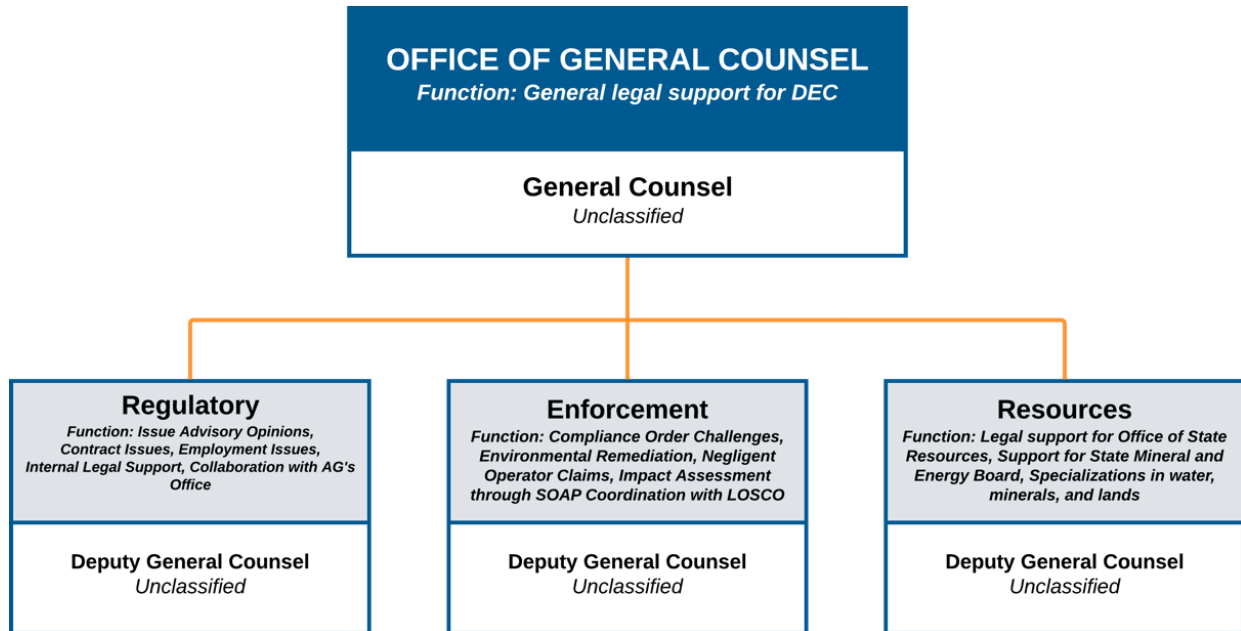
Potential strategies to achieve these objectives include introducing regulations enabling the Trust Authority to leverage federal funding for loan programs aimed at enhancing energy reliability and reducing consumer costs. Federal Loan Program Office funding will support critical energy infrastructure with an initial focus on natural gas and offshore wind projects to ensure long-term stability and affordability. Innovative financing tools, such as green bonds, will attract private investment in renewable energy projects while maintaining public oversight and accountability. Offshore wind development, leveraging proximity to the Gulf of Mexico, will diversify Louisiana’s energy portfolio, offering long-term economic and

environmental benefits. A capital subsidy program under the Trust Authority, in collaboration with Louisiana Economic Development (LED), will reduce financial barriers for developers through incentives such as state-backed bonds, federal grants, and direct subsidies. Tax abatements and infrastructure credits will further attract experienced developers and accelerate project timelines; while maximizing federal support through mechanisms such as the Investment Tax Credit (ITC) and Production Tax Credit (PTC) will alleviate financial burdens and enhance competitiveness.

For natural gas leadership, Louisiana's extensive natural gas resources, including the Haynesville Shale, provide a competitive edge in pricing, supporting industrial growth and residential affordability. Actions include issuing a Natural Gas Proclamation to reaffirm Louisiana's leadership in natural gas production and its strategic importance nationally. Policy recommendations include collaborating with the PSC to implement regulations that accelerate natural gas generation while balancing cost risks for industrial and residential consumers. The state will also establish frameworks to incentivize responsible production practices that align with environmental goals and bolster long-term sustainability.

Nuclear energy advancement is also a priority, with federal incentives offering a pathway to adopting emissions-free baseload power that aligns with state and national climate goals. The Louisiana Energy Office will identify Brownfield sites suitable for nuclear development, such as Dolet Hills near Shreveport, leveraging existing infrastructure to minimize costs. Public-private partnerships will be developed to share development risks, ensuring financial and operational viability. Solar energy expansion is another strategic area, with potential to enhance solar capacity, particularly in underserved rural and urban areas where access to sustainable power sources is limited. The regulatory framework will balance the interests of landowners, developers, and local communities while streamlining permitting processes to reduce delays. Promoting domestic solar panel manufacturing will address supply chain vulnerabilities and support local economic growth. Evaluating agrivoltaic practices will integrate agricultural activities with solar farms, diversifying income for landowners while preserving arable land. Federal tax credits and grants will be leveraged to offset capital costs and improve project feasibility, ensuring equitable distribution of renewable energy benefits.

4.6 OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL



The Office of General Counsel (OGC) serves as the centralized legal authority within the DEC. Its primary role is to ensure that all departmental activities, decisions, and policies comply with applicable legal standards while also providing strategic legal guidance on complex regulatory, enforcement, and resource management issues. The office operates as a critical advisor to DEC’s leadership and serves as a resource for interpreting statutory authority, drafting regulations, and managing litigation.

Mission Statement

To provide comprehensive legal support to the Department of Energy and Natural Resources by delivering expert guidance in regulatory compliance, enforcement proceedings, statutory interpretation, and legislative initiatives, ensuring the department fulfills its mission to manage Louisiana’s energy and natural resources responsibly and sustainably.

OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Divisions

Regulatory and Administrative Division

Combines the functions of regulatory compliance, rulemaking, and administrative oversight. This division focuses on advising on compliance with state and federal environmental and natural resource laws,

ensuring that departmental regulations align with statutory mandates, and managing procedural aspects such as issuing notices of hearing and coordinating administrative hearings. By centralizing these functions, the division ensures efficient and transparent rulemaking processes and provides legal support for the department's policy initiatives. Its comprehensive structure supports consistency in legal interpretations and administrative actions, ensuring alignment with broader regulatory frameworks and advancing procedural clarity across the department.

Enforcement Division

Provides legal support for enforcement actions, including administrative penalties, litigation against non-compliant operators, and resolution of disputes involving violations of environmental or resource management statutes. The division emphasizes swift and decisive action to protect Louisiana's natural resources, leveraging legal tools and interagency collaboration to ensure compliance and address violations effectively.

Resources Division

Specializes in legal issues related to resource allocation, mineral leasing, water rights, and coastal land management. It advises on the legal aspects of contracts, property rights, and financial transactions. By fostering robust partnerships and ensuring adherence to best practices, this division safeguards the long-term sustainability of Louisiana's vital natural resources.

Key Functions

Policy Development and Legislative Support

Advising on and drafting legislative, regulatory, and internal policy proposals, to enhance natural resource governance. This function ensures that the department remains proactive in adapting to evolving legal and regulatory landscapes.

Legal Compliance Monitoring

Reviewing departmental operations for alignment with local, state, and federal legal frameworks. Continuous monitoring enables the department to preemptively address compliance risks and uphold its commitments to regulatory excellence.

Litigation Management

Representing the department in legal disputes, including in judicial or administrative proceedings, and coordinating with the Attorney General's office to defend or advance the state's interests. This includes developing litigation strategies that align with state policies and public interests.

Stakeholder Engagement

Collaborating with other agencies, industries, and community groups to ensure legal transparency and compliance in state-sponsored initiatives. Engagement efforts aim to build trust, foster collaboration, and ensure that all stakeholders are aligned with the department's strategic objectives.

Tracking Precedent

Establishing a robust system for monitoring and documenting legal precedents that influence agency decisions. This includes maintaining a comprehensive database of case law, administrative rulings, and departmental determinations that can guide consistent decision-making. By leveraging historical precedent, the OGC ensures that decisions are legally defensible, transparent, and aligned with regulatory frameworks. This practice also creates a foundational resource for Attorney General opinions, enhancing legal consistency statewide.

Advisory Opinions

Offering formal legal interpretations and guidance to department officials and external stakeholders on regulatory and enforcement issues. These opinions help clarify complex legal matters and provide actionable insights for policy implementation.

PRIORITIES

- **Enhancing Interagency Coordination** – The OGC plays a pivotal role in bridging gaps between state agencies like the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, and federal entities such as the Environmental Protection Agency. By fostering collaboration, the OGC helps streamline processes and align strategies across agencies.
- **Strengthening Enforcement Capabilities** – By integrating advanced legal technologies and fostering innovative legal strategies, the OGC ensures robust enforcement mechanisms that promote compliance and protect responsible operators. This includes leveraging data analytics to prioritize enforcement actions and target high-risk activities.
- **Regulatory Modernization** – The office is tasked with reviewing and updating outdated statutory and regulatory frameworks to improve legal defensibility, efficiency, clarity, and adaptability. Modernization efforts focus on aligning regulations with contemporary challenges, such as climate resilience and sustainable resource management.

Remedies for Impacted Parties

The OGC oversees mechanisms to address the needs of parties affected by commercial operations. Through the Saltwater and Oil Assessment Process (SOAP), the office ensures that remediation efforts meet regulatory requirements and are undertaken in a timely and effective manner. The SOAP process creates a clear and expedited path for addressing damage caused by saltwater intrusion or operational impacts. By establishing an administrative framework that mirrors elements of an Article II court system, SOAP enables impacted landowners to seek remedies outside of traditional litigation, including voluntary compensation

for damages, environmental restoration, and mitigation. This structured approach reduces the need for lawsuits, such as legacy lawsuits under R.S. 30:29, by providing a consistent, transparent, and efficient process to resolve disputes and assess damages. In conjunction with the Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinator's traditional responsibilities of assessing oil spill damages, the SOAP process would leverage similar staffing structures. This ensures clear, consistent, and scientifically grounded methodologies for assessing both saltwater and operational damages, creating synergy between the two frameworks. By aligning procedural and evaluative standards, the department fosters an integrated approach to environmental and operational damage assessment. Additionally, the SOAP framework is designed to integrate seamlessly with internal processes and external oversight mechanisms, such as those led by the Attorney General or related authorities. This ensures that findings and decisions from SOAP are not only actionable but also serve as a foundational reference for broader legal and regulatory initiatives. By doing so, the framework establishes a standardized and authoritative basis for decision-making that enhances transparency, accountability, and consistency across state and federal levels.

STAFFING AND RESOURCES

General Counsel Leadership

Oversees all divisions of the Office and serves as the general legal advisor of DEC. This leadership ensures the alignment of legal strategies with departmental goals and enhances the overall effectiveness of the legal framework.

Division-Specific Attorneys

Specialists assigned to each division ensure focused expertise in their respective areas, such as environmental law, water rights, and administrative law. These attorneys provide targeted legal insights that enhance the department's operational and regulatory capabilities.

Support Staff

Paralegals, legal researchers, and administrative professionals streamline operations and provide critical support for case management and document preparation. Their contributions ensure the efficient handling of legal processes and the timely delivery of departmental objectives.

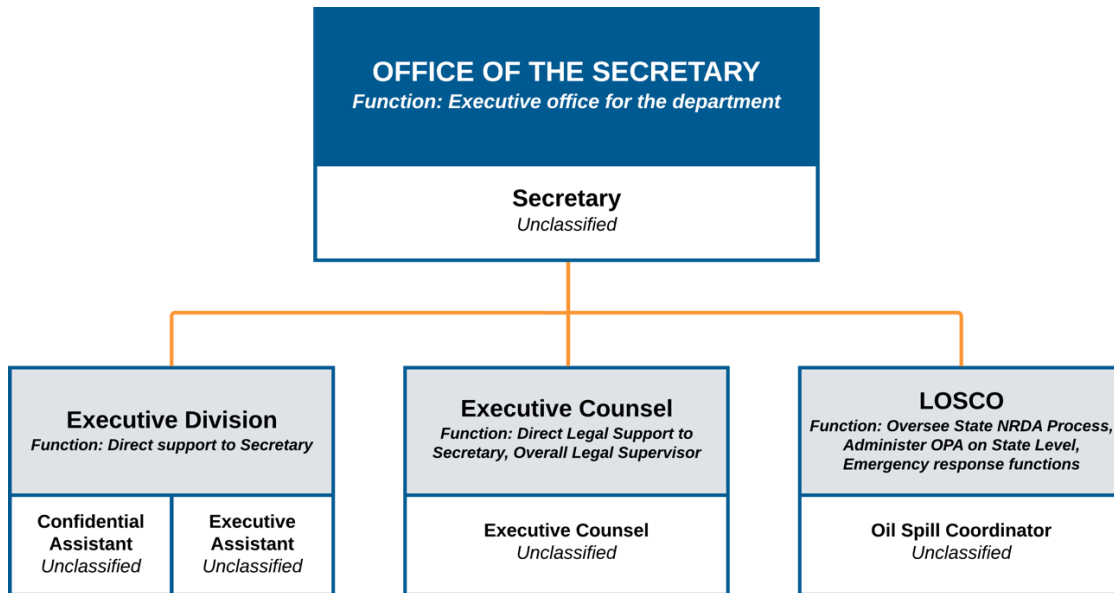
LONG-TERM GOALS

- Establish DEC as a national leader in legal compliance and enforcement strategies for energy and natural resources. This involves pioneering innovative approaches to regulation and fostering partnerships that enhance the state's leadership in sustainable resource management.

- Develop a robust, transparent regulatory framework that supports innovation while safeguarding public and environmental interests. By prioritizing transparency, the department aims to build trust with stakeholders and ensure equitable outcomes.
- Cultivate public trust through consistent, ethical, and legally sound decision-making processes. This goal emphasizes accountability, clarity, and responsiveness in addressing public and stakeholder concerns.

This comprehensive structure ensures the Office of General Counsel not only fulfills its immediate legal obligations but also positions the department to adapt to emerging challenges and opportunities in managing Louisiana’s vital resources. By embedding legal excellence into every aspect of its operations, the OGC supports DEC’s mission to balance economic development with environmental stewardship, ensuring the sustainable use of the state’s natural resources for generations to come.

4.7 OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY



The Office of the Secretary provides leadership, vision, and strategic coordination for the Department of Energy and Conservation, ensuring that all divisions operate cohesively to achieve sustainable management of Louisiana’s natural resources.

GOALS

- Develop cohesive policies that guide departmental actions toward sustainability.
- Enhance interagency collaboration to advance Louisiana’s environmental goals.

AUTHORITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Office of the Secretary is led by the Secretary, the chief executive of DEC, as well as the appointed executive positions, the Executive Counsel, the Executive Assistant, an Internal Auditor, and any necessary specialized oversight roles dedicated to ensuring transparency and accountability in all operations. The office derives authority from the revised statutes, including but not limited to:

- R.S. 36:351 – Department of Energy and Natural Resources
- R.S. 36:352 – Officer of the department
- R.S. 36:353 – Secretary of natural resources
- R.S. 36:354 – Powers and duties of secretary of natural resources
- R.S. 30:413 – Certified emergencies, suspension of act

DIVISIONS

Executive Division and Executive Counsel

The Executive Division is tasked with overseeing the development of key performance metrics to ensure accountability and transparency. It ensures that departmental goals align with state policies and public expectations. The Executive Counsel provides direct legal support to the Secretary and is the overall legal supervisor of DEC.

Oil Spill Coordinator's Office

The Oil Spill Coordinator's Office (LOSCO) serves as a coordinating function that operates across multiple departments, offices and divisions, making its placement in the Office of the Secretary essential for comprehensive oversight and leadership. This office conducts state assessments for damages caused by environmental incidents, including saltwater intrusion due to commercial operations. It works closely with the Office of General Counsel, leveraging expertise in environmental law and the Natural Resources Damage Assessment (NRDA) process. LOSCO evaluates damages, conducts environmental impact studies, and quantifies restoration costs to ensure the accountability of responsible parties. Furthermore, it aligns restoration efforts with Louisiana's ecological and economic goals, ensuring adequate compensation for resource damages while advocating for statutory revisions to comprehensively address damage assessments and act decisively to protect and restore the environment.

In addition, LOSCO serves as the lead agency for Emergency Support Functions (ESF) 10 and 12 at the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP). It provides centralized leadership during emergencies involving hazardous materials and energy disruptions, functioning as the incident commander for environmental emergencies. The office ensures efficient coordination with GOHSEP and other stakeholders, activates specialized response teams to mitigate risks, and streamlines operations with state and federal agencies to prioritize public safety and minimize environmental damage. To further enhance its effectiveness, LOSCO requires statutory revisions to address all emergency needs immediately, including securing necessary supplies and materials for environmental protection without delays caused by standard procurement processes. Exemption from procurement protocols is essential to facilitate rapid response capabilities. By integrating these responsibilities, LOSCO ensures comprehensive management of immediate and long-term environmental recovery efforts, solidifying its role as a pivotal component of the Office of the Secretary.

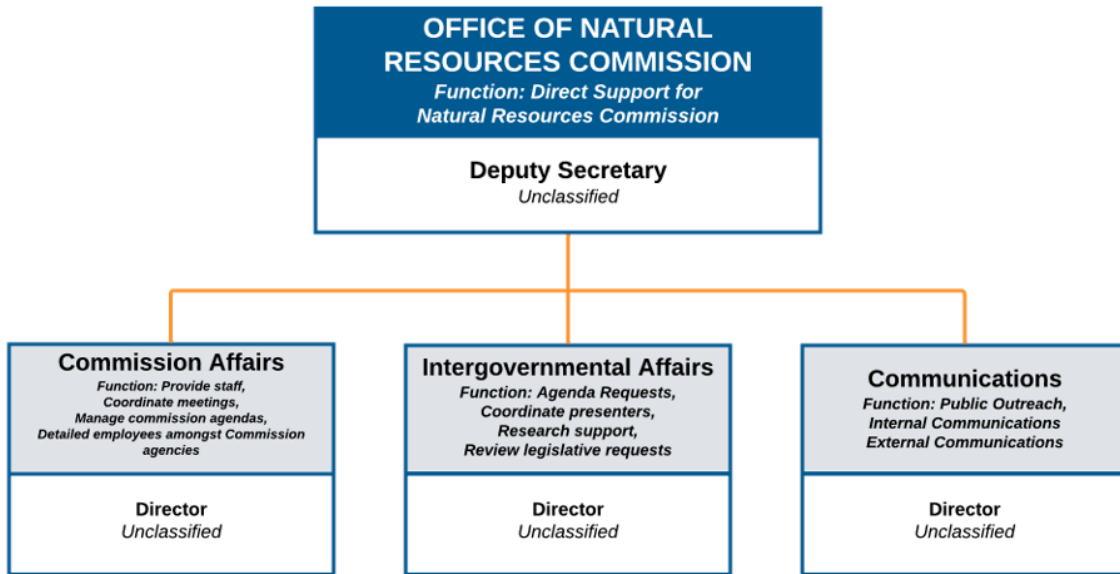
Oilfield Site Restoration Function

The Oilfield Site Restoration function, through its executive director, will continue within the authority of the Office of the Secretary, getting support from other offices, as needed, in addressing the environmental and economic impacts of orphaned and abandoned oilfield sites. It serves as the primary lead

for plugging and site-restoration efforts, collaborating with the Trust Authority and the Mineral and Energy Board. The function advocates for increased well-plugging and site restoration industry representation before the Mineral and Energy Board to enhance stakeholder engagement and balanced decision-making. Additionally, it acts as the main point of contact for alternatives to plugging and abandonment schedules and alternative compliance plans, approved by the State Mineral and Energy Board, reviewing documentation and justification for granting operators alternative compliance schedules.

The functions in this office will be limited to remediation efforts with the department's mission of protecting natural resources while offering operational flexibility for stakeholders. By integrating strategic remediation and compliance flexibility, the Oilfield Site Restoration Function balances environmental preservation with operational needs, ensuring a cohesive framework for managing orphaned sites.

4.8 OFFICE OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION



The Office of the Natural Resources Commission (ONRC) at the direction of the NRC serves as a transformative, multifaceted institution within Louisiana’s DEC. It is strategically positioned to unify governance principles, advance innovative methodologies, and foster long-term planning for the sustainable management of Louisiana’s natural resources. Drawing inspiration from the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), the ONRC integrates policy development, regulatory oversight, and intergovernmental collaboration into a cohesive framework, ensuring the state’s natural resources are managed with precision, resilience, and sustainability. It staffs and assists the NRC in its duties, including its role making multi-agency recommendations and policy pronouncements.

At its core, the ONRC transcends administrative functionality by addressing systemic challenges through dynamic and forward-thinking governance. It actively engages with stakeholders at all levels—federal, state, and local—to harmonize Louisiana’s economic development with environmental and natural resources conservation goals. The ONRC embodies adaptability and responsiveness, leveraging dynamic frameworks that incorporate periodic reviews and governance evaluations. These mechanisms allow the ONRC to remain proactive in addressing crises, technological advancements, and regulatory shifts, ensuring that governance systems are relevant and effective in the face of evolving global and regional challenges.

Its centralized oversight mechanism facilitates transparency, promotes collaboration, and aligns local interests with global imperatives. This innovative approach solidifies Louisiana's reputation as a leader in natural resource governance and a model for adaptive policy implementation.

As the primary entity for interagency coordination on natural resource and energy-related matters, the ONRC dismantles inefficiencies, bridges operational silos, and establishes an integrated approach to resource management. By embedding innovation and flexibility within its operational ethos, the ONRC positions Louisiana as a national leader in natural resource policy, ensuring strategies are not only effective but also resilient to economic, environmental, and legislative pressures. This comprehensive vision reinforces Louisiana's role in addressing the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

MISSION

The ONRC is dedicated to advancing sustainable resource management by fostering collaborative governance, pioneering strategic innovations, and proactively addressing complex environmental and economic challenges. Through comprehensive oversight and policy integration, the ONRC ensures sound decision-making that aligns with Louisiana's long-term developmental objectives. Acting as the preeminent advisory body to NRC leadership, the commission harmonizes state policy directives with regional and national energy, resource and environmental benchmarks, guaranteeing that Louisiana remains competitive and adaptive in a rapidly evolving global landscape.

CORE OBJECTIVES

The ONRC aims to establish a comprehensive, forward-looking framework for natural resource management that unifies DEC's offices under a cohesive strategy. By carefully integrating Louisiana's policies with federal standards and regional priorities, the ONRC amplifies both resource and ecological conservation and economic growth. It actively evaluates departmental performance against strategic benchmarks, ensuring alignment with statutory requirements and environmental regulations. Through periodic audits and adaptive methodologies, the ONRC embeds innovative practices into operational structures to optimize efficiency and sustainability.

Regional customization is central to the ONRC's approach. Tailored solutions address Louisiana's diverse needs, ensuring equitable resource allocation for both coastal and inland regions. Regional committees, comprising stakeholders and subject matter experts, gather localized insights and integrate them into broader departmental objectives. These committees act as conduits for addressing external factors, such as federal directives and interstate agreements, enhancing Louisiana's ability to leverage federal resources effectively.

A pivotal function of the ONRC is managing legislative needs that require cross-agency collaboration. By embedding subject matter experts within its structure, the ONRC ensures that all legislative inquiries and proposals are thoroughly vetted and prioritized for productivity. It serves as the first point of contact for legislators and executive branch members seeking resources and expertise to help guide potential solutions to multifaceted challenges, ensuring legislative task forces are centralized and outcome oriented. This proactive management guarantees coherence, efficiency, and a streamlined approach to addressing complex issues.

FUNCTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The ONRC operates through three core pillars that define its strategic framework:

Policy and Governance Innovation: This pillar focuses on designing policies that integrate resource and ecological conservation priorities with economic growth objectives. Comprehensive evaluations ensure that initiatives are grounded in empirical data and sustainability principles. By adopting advanced practices and technologies, the ONRC positions Louisiana as a national leader in environmental governance and resource innovation.

Communications: This pillar facilitates seamless communication and collaboration between DEC, other state and federal agencies, local governments, and the federal delegation and their staffs. It manages liaison activities to ensure timely responses to emergent crises while fostering accountability and transparency. The ONRC's centralized structure enhances coordination, ensuring all entities align with shared goals and regulatory requirements.

Future-Focused Resource Planning: This pillar emphasizes forward-thinking strategies through longitudinal studies and scenario analyses. By anticipating resource vulnerabilities and integrating renewable technologies, the ONRC ensures fiscal and environmental sustainability. It conducts in-depth impact assessments to optimize resource allocation and maintain adaptability in the face of shifting economic and environmental landscapes.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The ONRC's operational model is distributed across three strategic divisions:

Divisions

Commission Affairs: This division provides administrative support to the Natural Resources Commission, ensuring organizational transparency and strategic alignment. It interfaces with local, state, and federal entities, fostering continuity in collaborative efforts and maintaining accountability in decision-making processes.

Intergovernmental Affairs: This division addresses systemic inefficiencies and offers expert guidance on legislative and regulatory matters. It conducts comprehensive research to adapt Louisiana’s policy frameworks to emerging challenges, ensuring alignment with both state and federal objectives. The division also manages legislative inquiries, serving as a centralized hub for task force coordination and actionable policymaking.

Communications: This division spearheads initiatives to educate stakeholders and strengthen participatory governance. By developing financial plans and leveraging partnerships, it optimizes funding for statewide resource projects. Outreach programs and stakeholder forums ensure transparency and inclusivity in decision-making processes, fostering trust and collaboration across all sectors.

METRICS OF SUCCESS

The ONRC employs rigorous metrics to evaluate its impact:

- *Operational Efficiency:* Effectiveness is measured by the timeliness of interagency collaborations, reductions in procedural redundancies, and successful execution of strategic initiatives.
- *Fiscal Effectiveness:* The ONRC tracks capital acquisition, cost savings from innovative practices, and the successful allocation of funding toward sustainability-focused projects.
- *Sustainability Outcomes:* Progress is monitored through reductions in environmental degradation, integration of renewable energy solutions, and improvements in conservation metrics.
- *Stakeholder Engagement:* Engagement is assessed by increased participation in public forums, higher satisfaction levels among stakeholders, and strengthened partnerships with community and industry leaders.

Together, these metrics ensure that the ONRC remains accountable, adaptive, and impactful in driving meaningful advancements in resource management.

ROADMAP

The ONRC’s strategic roadmap focuses on continuous improvement and adaptability. Initial priorities include finalizing operational frameworks in consultation with DEC leadership and stakeholders. Pilot programs will test interagency collaboration models, with refinements based on iterative feedback. Annual performance reviews will highlight achievements, identify areas for improvement, and inform forward-looking priorities. Training programs will align stakeholders with ONRC methodologies, while a dynamic legislative tracking system ensures responsiveness to emerging needs. Biennial reviews of strategic plans will maintain adaptability and relevance, enabling the ONRC to navigate evolving challenges and leverage new opportunities.

CONCLUSION

The ONRC represents a paradigm shift in natural resource governance, embodying a holistic approach that integrates collaboration, innovation, and resilience. Its comprehensive strategies ensure that Louisiana's natural resources are managed with foresight, precision, and accountability. By fostering adaptability and transparency, the ONRC lays the foundation for an innovative and sustainable future, reinforcing Louisiana's commitment to environmental stewardship and economic prosperity. Through its transformative vision and proactive leadership, the ONRC establishes Louisiana as a beacon of excellence in natural resource management for generations to come.

CHAPTER 5 – TRANSFORMING THE STATEWIDE APPROACH

The DRIVE Initiative highlights Louisiana’s structural and systemic disparities in resource management, particularly in flood control and natural resource governance. While coastal regions benefit from robust support through the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA), non-coastal areas are left vulnerable due to fragmented oversight and insufficient funding. The DRIVE Initiative seeks to address these inequities by establishing the Upland Restoration & Management Authority (URMA) and leveraging the Trust Authority to implement innovative financial and operational solutions in cooperation with existing entities, including levee districts, parishes, and other affiliated entities. These transformative reforms aim to elevate statewide flood protection, enhance natural resource dependent project decommissioning and site restoration efforts, and stimulate economic growth through strategic, collaborative, and technology-driven governance frameworks.

By integrating state and federal efforts and fostering partnerships across public and private sectors, the DRIVE Initiative aims to position Louisiana as a national leader in sustainable resource management. It underscores the importance of utilizing advanced technologies, interdisciplinary collaboration, and resilient infrastructure to address both immediate and long-term challenges. Through its forward-thinking strategies, Louisiana is poised to become a model for intuitive, efficient, and adaptive governance.

5.1 KEY OBJECTIVES AND COMPONENTS - OVERVIEW

Addressing Statewide Flood Protection and Risk Management

Rather than creating new entities, the DRIVE Initiative seeks to repurpose existing structures like the Red River Waterway Commission (RRWC) to take on expanded responsibilities in flood protection and resource management. The RRWC’s mission will be broadened to include upland flood mitigation efforts and risk management strategies, modeled on the CPRA Board’s proven success in coastal areas. By coordinating with the USACE Vicksburg District, the RRWC will serve as a centralized hub for funding allocation, project execution, and advanced risk assessment.

This approach leverages existing expertise, enhances disaster preparedness, and ensures equitable, and yet prioritization-based, distribution of protective measures across all regions without duplicating efforts or resources. Through expanded mandates, such entities will adopt predictive analytics and modern technologies, maximizing the impact of the Watershed Initiative, to optimize resource use and build resilient infrastructure.

SOAP: A Framework for Saltwater and Oil Assessment Process

The Saltwater and Oil Assessment Process (SOAP) integrates LOSCO’s expertise with a state-specific administrative framework modeled on federal NRDA protocols. By refining LOSCO’s role and

capabilities, SOAP introduces advanced methods for data-driven assessments and streamlined decision-making. Utilizing real-time data analytics, GIS mapping, and stakeholder engagement, SOAP fosters transparency and accountability while reducing reliance on judicial remedies for environmental restoration. By transitioning to a more predictable administrative approach, SOAP ensures faster and more equitable outcomes for affected communities, creating a robust mechanism for environmental stewardship.

Enhancing Water and Power for Economic Development

Sustainable water resource management requires rigorous integration of policy, science, and technology. Under the DRIVE Initiative, centralized oversight by the Office of State Resources will ensure balanced allocation among industrial, agricultural, and residential needs while maintaining robust environmental safeguards. By refining permitting processes under the Office of Permitting and Compliance, the initiative will enhance regulatory efficiency and create an intuitive framework for water distribution.

In energy management, the DRIVE Initiative will collaborate with the Public Service Commission to modernize state government by fostering partnerships that catalyze market-driven renewable energy projects that meet a market need. By focusing on microgrids, advanced storage systems, and hydrogen-based energy, the initiative will bridge disparities in energy access, support industrial growth, and bolster resilience in urban and rural areas. These developments will ensure a sustainable energy future while driving statewide economic growth.

Strengthening Governance and Operational Efficiency

Governance reforms centralize coordination under the Mineral and Energy Board, consolidating advisory boards like the Water Resources Commission and groundwater management entities. These streamlined structures eliminate redundancies and enhance interagency cooperation. The Chief Resilience Officer (CRO) leads statewide flood mitigation strategies, oversees expanded coordination efforts, and optimizes Louisiana's engagement with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). These reforms create a cohesive policy framework that enhances operational efficiency and resilience.

Partnerships and Community Engagement

The DRIVE Initiative emphasizes strengthening partnerships with entities like the Louisiana Community Development Authority (LCDA) and regional commissions. By aligning their objectives with statewide priorities, these entities will amplify infrastructure development, navigation enhancement, and financial innovation. Community engagement through public forums and educational initiatives will build trust and ensure active participation in policy development. These collaborations foster a transparent governance model that responds to local needs while maintaining strategic coherence.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

The DRIVE Initiative will fundamentally transform Louisiana’s resource management by optimizing the roles of existing entities, fostering economic vitality, and enhancing resilience against environmental challenges. Key outcomes include:

Enhanced Resilience: Expanded mandates for entities like RRWC will address statewide flood risks, protect vulnerable communities, and enhance disaster preparedness.

Water and Energy Access: Repurposed agencies will ensure balanced resource allocation, driving growth across urban and rural areas.

Economic Growth: Strengthening public-private partnerships and efficient energy policies will stimulate investment, support industrial development, and position Louisiana as a hub for innovation.

Lead: By refining the functions of existing structures, Louisiana will set a benchmark for sustainable and adaptive governance without unnecessary administrative expansion.

The DRIVE Initiative represents a paradigm shift in Louisiana’s resource management strategy. By leveraging and refining existing entities, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, and prioritizing resilience, it positions the state as a leader in sustainable governance and environmental stewardship. Through these efforts, Louisiana will not only address current challenges but also lay the foundation for a prosperous, and resilient future.

5.2 WATER AND POWER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Engagement on Water Resource Management

Louisiana’s advancement in sustainable water resource management requires a rigorous and integrative approach that leverages policy, science, and technology. Centralized oversight by the Office of State Resources will drive statewide water management strategies, ensuring a balanced allocation of future use of water that serves industrial, agricultural, and residential needs while maintaining long-term sustainability of the state’s water resources. Streamlining permitting processes under the Office of Permitting and Compliance will enhance regulatory efficiency while maintaining strict environmental safeguards. Simultaneously, the Mineral Board will oversee the commercialization of water resources, aligning economic gains with the state’s broader environmental goals.

The DRIVE Initiative has identified critical disparities in water and flood management between coastal and non-coastal areas of the state. While CPRA successfully serves the role of a unified actor for coastal flood protection, non-coastal areas lack a similar centralized authority. To address this gap, the URMA is proposed as a counterpart to CPRA, focusing on upland flood protection and water management. URMA will integrate efforts from various entities, including the Office of State Resources, to ensure seamless statewide coordination and equity in resource allocation.

A centralized hub for data management and decision-making will further enhance these efforts. This hub will standardize data-sharing protocols among local, state, and federal entities, ensuring actionable intelligence for evidence-based decision-making. Collaborative efforts with academic institutions, private industry, and international partners will enhance interdisciplinary research, enrich policy frameworks, and align operational practices across sectors. The Chief Resilience Officer (CRO) will oversee the integration of these initiatives, ensuring alignment with statewide resilience and sustainability goals.

The anticipated outcomes of this approach include balanced water allocation and sustainable utilization of groundwater and surface water resources. Enhanced real-time monitoring and predictive modeling capabilities will position Louisiana to dynamically adapt to changing environmental and economic conditions. By focusing efforts on multi-parish regionalization, Louisiana will address inefficiencies inherent in localized water management systems. This transformation will provide a transparent governance framework that builds public trust and ensures optimal resource utilization across all parishes.

Engagement on Power Generation

Transforming Louisiana's energy landscape necessitates proactive engagement in power generation projects and strategic policy innovation. Collaboration with the Public Service Commission (PSC) will enable the state to influence energy holistically and advocate for comprehensive grid modernization. Public-private partnerships will catalyze the development of cutting-edge power generation solutions, prioritizing renewable energy integration and advanced energy technologies such as microgrids, energy storage, and hydrogen-based systems. Addressing disparities in energy access across urban and rural regions will foster equitable growth and resilience.

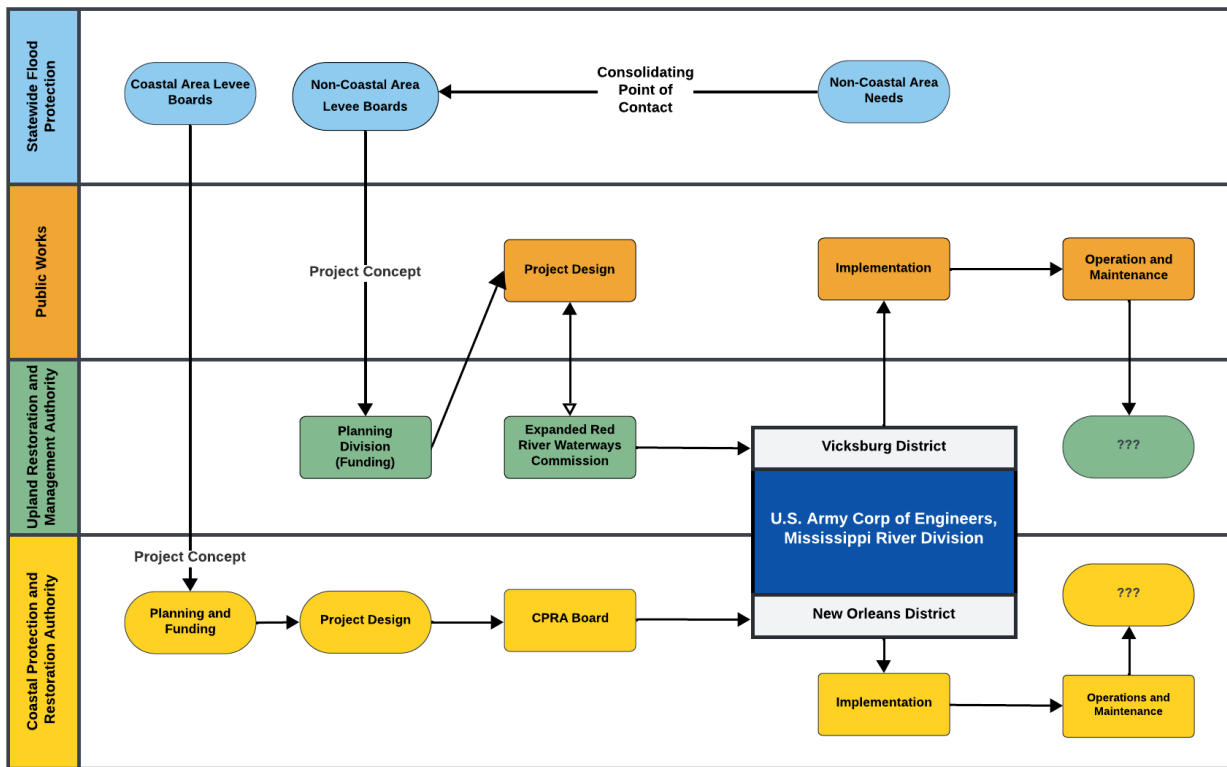
Strategic energy summits and innovation hubs will bring together stakeholders from government, industry, and academia to share knowledge and advance collaborative projects. The Power Division of the Office of Energy will lead as liaison with the PSC, ensuring that Louisiana's energy strategies align with long-term economic and environmental goals. These initiatives aim to position Louisiana as a leader in sustainable energy innovation, fostering a more resilient and equitable energy future.

5.3 STATEWIDE FLOOD PROTECTION

The DRIVE Initiative's comprehensive review of statewide efforts pertaining to flood control, restoration, and protection has shown differing levels of support for coastal and non-coastal areas of the state. Coastal areas benefit from the statutorily mandated development of a master plan for integrated coastal protection, which provides a blueprint for the advancement of projects that provide all stakeholders a voice in project selection. In addition, Coastal areas also

benefit from the support provided by the CPRA serving as the single point of contact with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), as well as a dedicated funding source for projects. CPRA’s ability to pursue federal dollars and use the federal funds to deliver projects is a source of pride for the state. While coastal areas are well-supported and well-funded, the same is not true for non-coastal areas.

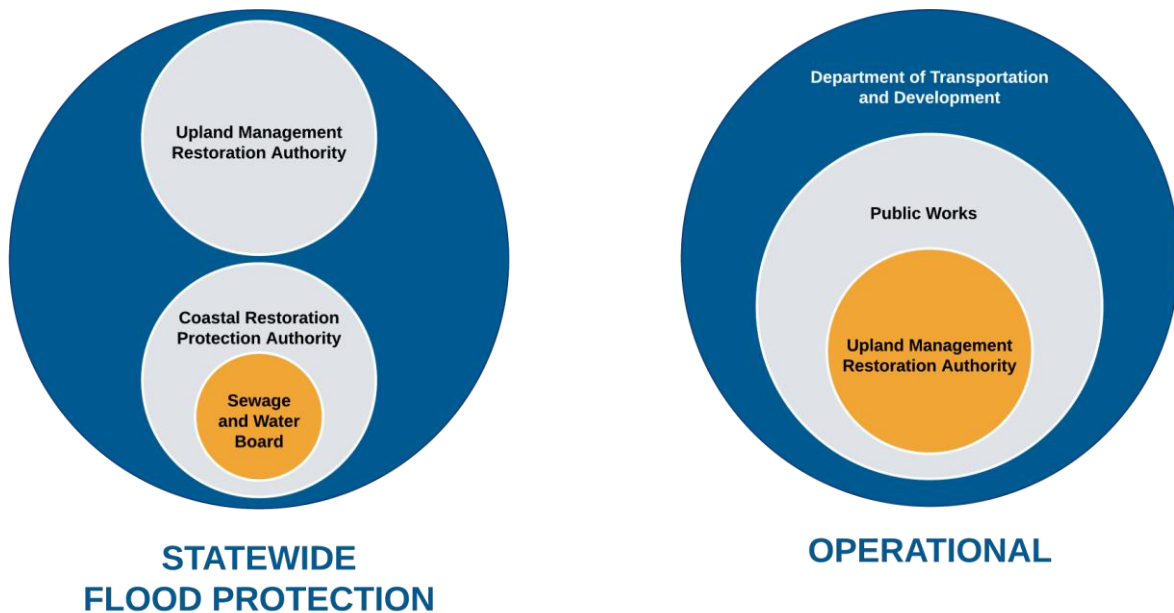
In the absence of a master plan identifying a concerted approach to flood protection projects located outside the Coastal area, local levee districts and commissions must compete against each other for project funding. The statewide flood control program is administered by the Public Works division of the Office of Engineering at the Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD). Unlike in the Coastal area, however, there is no statutory mandate for the development of a master plan for flood control projects in other areas of the State. While Public Works statutes provide DOTD the authority needed to deliver flood control, navigational, and other water-centric projects, the mandatory planning requirements and funding levels that have made CPRA successful are absent from the current statewide flood control regime. The DRIVE Initiative proposes to modernize the system to create the URMA, along with improvements to the statewide flood control system and improved access to funding through the Trust Authority.



PROPOSED FRAMEWORK

The proposed framework consists of several interconnected functions to provide capability to the system while not diluting the success of CPRA in its current task in the coastal area. First, the Natural Resources Commission serves as a strategic coordination body for all agencies involved in natural resources management. The Commission will serve to streamline governance by dissolving DEC’s advisory boards and task forces and replacing them with one Commission. The Commission will also serve to provide a coordinated response amongst agencies to Federal action and to ensure all agencies move in the same direction. The proposed URMA entity will be developed using the statewide flood control portion of Public Works and will work with non-coastal levee districts to serve as the point of contact for the USACE Mississippi River Valley Division and the Vicksburg District. URMA will also serve as a non-federal sponsor for projects much like CPRA does inside the coastal area. URMA will leverage funding provided by state sources such as the Trust Authority, DEC, and the dedicated statewide flood protection expenditures. URMA will look towards future expansion and utilization of entities such as the Red River Waterway Commission (RRWC) to maximize local return on investment for millage dollars. URMA will also pursue Federal funding for projects much like CPRA does for coastal areas. CPRA will maintain its independence and focus on the coastal area.

STATEWIDE FLOOD PROTECTION



If the Trust Authority is successful, DEC will provide funding support for URMA and CPRA in the future. DEC can utilize funding sources such as LOSCO damage assessments and Trust Authority revenues. DEC will not pursue project design or implementation, instead leaving these functions to the expertise of URMA and CPRA. DEC will focus its efforts on regulation and management of the state's natural resources under its jurisdiction.

Finally, the proposed structure includes an opportunity to provide statewide flood protection support. This will be accomplished through the Chief Resilience Officer, who is already statutorily charged with coordination of flood risk mitigation. The Chief Resilience Officer will also coordinate the state's participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

AGENCY ROLES

Department of Energy and Conservation

DEC plays a pivotal role in supporting environmental restoration efforts of oil and oilfield wastes, particularly through funding mechanisms such as the Trust Authority and LOSCO. The DRIVE Initiative has emphasized the importance of improving efficiency through capitalizing on agency expertise. While DEC may lack the specialized expertise needed to implement certain restoration initiatives like URMA and CPRA, it can effectively focus on identifying new financial support to ensure these projects are carried out. The Trust Authority, established in the 2024 regular session through Act 727 and granted authority over oilfield site restoration in the 2024 Third Extraordinary Session, can generate funding by bonding revenues, making it a key financial resource for restoration efforts. Meanwhile, LOSCO, which was transferred to DEC in 2024, has oversight over state damage assessments and offers a dedicated funding source for specific restoration projects. Together, The Trust Authority and LOSCO enable DEC to play a crucial role in driving environmental restoration through targeted funding rather than direct project management.

Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority

CPRA's independence has been maintained through the DRIVE Initiative. The independence of CPRA and its focused mission have resulted in great success for coastal areas of the state. Public support for CPRA and its mission is high. CPRA will continue its mission unchanged, as stated in previous DRIVE Initiative documents. CPRA and URMA will work together to provide flood protection and restoration services to the entire state.

Upland Restoration and Management Authority

Flood Protection

URMA will provide new capabilities to non-coastal areas of the state in the form of flood protection, risk reduction, and restoration. CPRA has provided these capabilities to the coastal area for

years with great success. URMA will adopt the successful master planning process of CPRA for its own use in non-coastal areas and develop specific projects to improve flood protection and provide risk reduction to non-coastal areas. URMA will solicit funding from all available sources, including the Trust Authority revenues, to fund projects in annual plans alike to CPRA.

The creation of URMA will require drafting narrowly tailored statutes, likely modeled on CPRA's enabling statutes, to provide mission and capability. These statutes would enable URMA to be a stand-alone entity akin to CPRA. However, until adequate funding has been obtained, DOTD should continue to perform the URMA functions, utilizing its broad authority in the Public Works statutes to pursue project implementation. This will provide stability and capability to the URMA concept that would not be present if URMA was created as a stand-alone entity with limited funding.

URMA will also need to begin to develop a strategic plan, which will require funding. It is proposed that a one-time appropriation of capital outlay money be given in the 2025 Regular Session to fund planning at an appropriate level. This funding presents an opportunity to not only develop plans to improve flood control structure but also an opportunity to pursue flood insurance improvement in the state. URMA should investigate the possibility of using its planning process and projects to pursue changes to federal flood maps based on risk reduction. This will allow citizens to obtain a greater return on investment for planning dollars.

U.S Army Corps of Engineers, Vicksburg District

CPRA provides coastal levee districts and other entities with a single point of contact for the USACE inside the coastal zone. No similar situation exists for levee districts in non-coastal areas. URMA will provide this capability as a single point of contact for the USACE outside of the coastal zone. This will prevent individual entities in non-coastal areas from competing against each other for funding from the USACE. Under the URMA structure, URMA will pursue funding from the USACE which will be distributed to individual projects pursuant to URMA's planning process.

Levee Districts and Commissions

Coastal flood protection entities, such as levee districts, can lean on CPRA for non-Federal match dollars and sponsorship of projects. These entities can also lean on CPRA to find funding for projects that are included in CPRA annual and master plans. The same capability is not present in non-coastal areas. URMA will provide this narrowly tailored mission by serving as non-Federal sponsor for projects outside of the coastal area. URMA will also pursue funding opportunities on behalf of all non-coastal areas through its planning process, a capability that many individual entities may not have. Non-coastal and coastal districts will inevitably meet and interact, and these entities will need to coordinate their efforts to avoid conflict. Therefore, URMA and CPRA will need to coordinate their planning process. URMA's initial

planning process will, therefore, require a review of the Coastal Master Plan to determine how best to interconnect the non-coastal and coastal systems.

Red River Waterways Commission

URMA, like any other state entity, requires reliable funding to fulfill its mission. Currently, \$20 million is dedicated to statewide flood control annually. This funding issue is compounded by the fact that coastal funding may be reduced as Deepwater Horizon settlement funding begins to end in the years to come. While coastal funding is currently secure and alternative funding mechanisms are being explored, funding for URMA beyond the current funding source must be obtained before projects can be developed. One potential source of future funding could be an expansion and utilization of the Red River Waterway Commission (RRWC). The RRWC provided a statutory millage each year for the management of the Red River system. Critics of the RRWC argue that an outsized portion of the millage is spent on recreational projects and that there has been limited improvement to commercial utilization of the Red River despite significant investment.

It is recommended that the legislature consider an expansion of the millage to fund projects in the entire non-coastal area. If the millage is not expanded, URMA will be limited in its ability to provide services to the non-coastal area. In addition to the expansion of the millage, the commission's authority should be expanded to encompass navigation, economic and recreational development, restoration, and management for flood protection. This will provide the RRWC flexibility to meet the non-coastal area's most urgent needs, such as improvement of the navigation channel and serving as a source of match dollars for critical projects.

The expansion of the RRWC's authority and geographical boundaries necessarily requires a review of the board's structure. Currently, member terms are set by the Governor and the director of public works serves as ex-officio chairman. Further, members of port commissions within the waterway are prohibited from serving as members of the RRWC. It is recommended that, if the RRWC's geographical boundaries are expanded, then The RRWC board should be expanded in membership to align with the impacted area's interests. Further, the secretaries of Louisiana Economic Development (LED) and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF), or their designees, should serve as non-voting members of the expanded board to provide the state's perspective on regional needs within their areas of expertise. Further, it is recommended that the chair of the board be designated as the Chief Resilience Officer, considering the expanded role of the CRO in flood control and risk reduction as described below.

This mirrors the structure of CPRA within the coastal area. It is recommended that members of the RRWC be given fixed membership terms, such as staggered six-year terms. This will ensure continuity between administrations while removing the potential for long-term appointments. Further, the prohibition

on port commission members described above should be removed. Indeed, the legislature should consider adding port commission representation to the expanded RRWC, as navigation is an important consideration for non-coastal waterways.

Office of Public Works, Department of Transportation and Development

DOTD currently possesses both the authority and capability for project development and delivery. The authority granted to DOTD in the Public Works statutes is used not only to deliver flood control projects but also to deliver numerous other aspects of its mission. DOTD's existing authority and institutional infrastructure can also be leveraged to begin delivering URMA's mission with no delay. Therefore, until URMA is created, funded, and staffed, the programs currently administered by Public Works will remain at DOTD, as well as the management of ongoing projects. Once URMA is operational and is equipped with statutory authority narrowly tailored to address the needs of non-coastal Louisiana flood protection, the Public Works statutes can be amended to remove this authority from DOTD. URMA's proximity to DOTD's existing will provide capability to URMA that would not be present if URMA was immediately formed into an independent quasi-agency akin to CPRA.

Statewide Flood Control

Chief Resilience Officer

The Chief Resilience Officer (CRO) is an office appointed by the Governor to coordinate state efforts with respect to resilience and risk mitigation, including flood risk mitigation. The URMA effort seeks to utilize this position to build capabilities alike to the Governor's Office for Coastal Activities (GOCA), focused specifically on flood control and risk mitigation efforts. GOCA provides policy support to the Governor concerning coastal issues in the state. This position has historically been successful at obtaining funding for projects and providing sound coastal policy. The creation of URMA seeks to capitalize on these successes while not diluting the coastal focus of the existing position. Therefore, it is proposed that the CRO's statutory mission be clarified to include statewide flood control interests. This concept also provides the opportunity for improvement to the state's participation in the National Flood Insurance Program by changing the statutory designee from DOTD's Office of Engineering to the CRO. The CRO will be able to provide statewide coordination services within the current statutory charge and is ideally situated to provide this capability. The CRO will also serve as chair of the expanded Red River Waterway Commission, providing a similar structure to the successful coastal model.

Louisiana Watershed Initiative

The Louisiana Watershed Initiative (LWI) is housed in the Division of Administration's Office of Community Development (OCD) pursuant to the executive order. LWI has utilized grant funds to provide groundbreaking modeling capability and funding for necessary projects. However, there is no certain future

for LWI once its current grant funding runs out. The projects and programs of LWI are beneficial to the state and its citizens, and their incorporation into the proposed natural resources governance structure is of great importance. It is proposed that LWI's programs and functions be reviewed by the Natural Resources Commission for incorporation into the natural resources governance structure.

National Flood Insurance Program

Currently, the state's participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) is coordinated by the Office of Engineering at DOTD pursuant to R.S. 38:85. The ability to enroll in NFIP participation is delegated to local communities such as parishes and municipalities. The DRIVE initiative and the creation of URMA provide an opportunity to create lasting and meaningful change to the state's NFIP participation by delegating these coordination responsibilities to the state's CRO. Indeed, the CRO's existing enabling statutes consider a role in flood risk mitigation. Louisiana's citizens pay dearly for flood insurance coverage, and desire support from the state level to make every effort to lower flood insurance costs. The proposed framework would place NFIP coordination with the CRO, who will be directly engaging with URMA in their planning process to include risk reduction in URMA master plans. The CRO will also be able to engage with coastal entities through the office's statewide reach to provide similar capability. This system, in concept, will enable the CRO to work with communities and FEMA to drive down costs through risk reduction.

5.4 FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSMENT OF SALTWATER & OIL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The Office of the Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinator (LOSCO), as outlined in Louisiana Revised Statutes Title 30, Chapter 19, is empowered to coordinate responses to oil spills and develop strategies to manage natural resource damages effectively. However, there is no state mechanism to engage fully in situations not covered by the federal Oil Pollution Act (OPA) and its current state equivalent. To enhance the state's capacity to assess and mitigate damages from saltwater from commercial exploration and production or other upstream resource-dependent operations⁷, this framework proposes an assessment process modeled on the OPA's natural resource damage assessment (NRDA) protocols but tailored for state-specific application. This process would be coordinated under the reorganized agency through the Office of General Counsel in conjunction with LOSCO's expertise.

This expanded process addresses scenarios where state-level jurisdiction applies, filling gaps in current frameworks. It also seeks to migrate away from reliance on judicial remedies, such as legacy

⁷ For the purposes of this framework, "commercial" refers to activities, operations, or entities engaged in the production, processing, or distribution of goods or services as it applies to operations that discharge saltwater as a byproduct of their activities, including but not limited to oil and gas extraction, manufacturing, and energy generation, giving consideration to operations with significant environmental impacts due to their scale, frequency, or intensity of saltwater discharge, requiring structured assessment and mitigation measures.

lawsuits, for environmental restoration by establishing an administrative process to address impacts from operations prospectively, particularly those resulting in saltwater discharge. By focusing on administrative solutions, Louisiana can transition away from the inefficiencies of litigation and foster more equitable and predictable outcomes for affected parties. By integrating stakeholder feedback and leveraging advanced technologies, the framework provides a comprehensive structure ensuring accountability, scientific integrity, and alignment with environmental stewardship principles. Additionally, any framework must recognize the need to clarify statutory responsibility for damages when multiple operators, both concurrent and historical, are present in an affected area. Addressing this ambiguity is critical to the success of administrative remedies and ensures that the appropriate parties are held accountable for restoration and mitigation efforts.

The proposed framework also emphasizes integrating technology and stakeholder engagement throughout the assessment process. By leveraging GIS, remote sensing, and real-time data analytics, Louisiana can improve the accuracy and speed of assessments. Additionally, robust community involvement through workshops, feedback sessions, and collaboration with local and regional entities ensures that the process remains open, transparent, and adaptable to local needs. This strategy not only strengthens trust between stakeholders and state agencies but also ensures that resource restoration aligns with broader community and environmental goals.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- **Transparency:** The process must be open, with stakeholder input and publicly accessible findings.
- **Scientific Integrity:** Use of peer-reviewed methodologies and robust data collection.
- **Efficiency:** Streamline processes to reduce response time and administrative burden.
- **Accountability:** Clear assignment of responsibilities to ensure compliance and timely remediation.
- **Adaptability:** Enable modifications to reflect technological advances and emerging environmental challenges.
- **Administrative Governance:** Build a prospective administrative framework to address impacts from commercial saltwater discharges, reducing reliance on judicial processes.
- **Consensus Building:** Use stakeholder engagement to build consensus for administrative solutions and establish consistent processes for remedying impacts.
- **Technological Integration:** Employ advanced tools like GIS, drones, and analytics for enhanced accuracy and decision-making.

PROPOSED ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

This framework is intended for discussion purposes only and serves as a foundational framework to initiate conversations about improving Louisiana’s approach to managing saltwater and oil damage assessments. The concepts and processes outlined herein are preliminary and subject to further refinement based on stakeholder input, interagency collaboration, and public commentary. By presenting this draft, the aim is to foster dialogue that will lead to the development of a robust and effective assessment process aligned with the state’s long-term strategic goals. It is not intended to represent a finalized or definitive policy framework.

Pre-Assessment Phase

Objective: Determine whether the saltwater or oil damage warrants a full-scale assessment.

Steps:

- **Incident Documentation:** Compile preliminary reports, photographs, and third-party observations of the incident.
- **Initial Impact Analysis:** Use remote sensing or on-site inspections to assess the extent of the damage.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Notify relevant parties, including landowners, community representatives, and regulatory agencies.
- **Baseline Data Review:** Gather pre-existing environmental, geological, and ecological data for the affected area.
- **Preliminary Risk Evaluation:** Assess the potential long-term impacts on ecosystems, water quality, and local economies.
- **Consensus Building Efforts:** Engage stakeholders early to identify concerns and align on assessment priorities.
- **Technology Deployment:** Initiate the use of GIS mapping and remote sensing for real-time damage evaluation.

Output: Decision on whether to proceed with a full assessment based on evidence of significant damage.

Assessment Planning Phase

Objective: Develop a structured plan to assess and quantify damages.

Steps:

- **Define Scope:** Establish the geographic and ecological boundaries of the affected area.
- **Set Objectives:** Specify the metrics for evaluating saltwater or oil damage, including impact on fisheries, groundwater salinity, vegetation, and wildlife.
- **Select Assessment Teams:** Identify qualified professionals (e.g., hydrologists, biologists, toxicologists) to conduct fieldwork and analyses.
- **Budget and Timeline:** Allocate financial resources and set a timeline for completion.
- **Trustee Coordination:** Secure agreement among all trustees, including the Departments of Environmental Quality, Wildlife and Fisheries, CPRA and/or URMA (depending on location), and any other relevant agencies.
- **Technology Deployment:** Develop plans for deploying drones, remote sensors, and GIS tools to capture high-resolution data.

- **Administrative Process Alignment:** Integrate the assessment planning into a broader administrative framework that allows for streamlined decision-making and enforcement mechanisms.
- **Stakeholder Collaboration:** Use workshops and consultations to refine the plan and ensure stakeholder alignment.
- **Additional Analysis:** Include an environmental justice evaluation, when needed, focused on the impacts on rural or underserved communities.

Output: Comprehensive assessment plan approved by all involved trustees.

Damage Quantification Phase

Objective: Measure and document the extent of saltwater or oil damage to natural resources.

Steps:

- **Field Surveys:** Collect soil, water, and biological samples from affected areas.
- **Hydrological Modeling:** Assess changes in salinity levels and their impact on water quality and ecosystems.
- **Ecosystem Impact Analysis:** Evaluate harm to vegetation, aquatic habitats, and wildlife populations.
- **Economic Valuation:** Estimate monetary costs of ecosystem service losses and restoration needs.
- **Community Impact Assessment:** Document effects on local economies, public health, and community resilience.
- **Administrative Recordkeeping:** Ensure all data and findings are documented in a centralized repository for transparency and future reference.
- **Collaborative Review:** Share findings with stakeholders to validate results and address concerns collaboratively.
- **Enhanced Data Sharing:** Use centralized platforms to make findings accessible to all relevant stakeholders and agencies.

Output: Detailed damage report quantifying environmental and economic impacts.

Restoration Planning Phase

Objective: Design and implement a plan to restore damaged resources to their baseline condition.

Steps:

- **Define Restoration Goals:** Align goals with state and federal regulations and stakeholder expectations.
- **Select Restoration Techniques:** Options include habitat reconstruction, water desalination projects, and species restocking.
- **Cost Estimation:** Prepare a detailed budget for the restoration project.
- **Stakeholder Review:** Conduct public meetings and collect feedback on the proposed restoration plan.
- **Trustee Consensus:** Obtain formal agreement from all trustees on the proposed restoration plan prior to implementation.

- **Mitigation Strategies:** Integrate measures to prevent future incidents, such as improved waste management protocols.
- **Administrative Enforcement:** Ensure mechanisms are in place to enforce compliance with restoration obligations under the administrative framework.
- **Stakeholder Approval:** Build consensus among stakeholders to ensure broad support for restoration activities.
- **Technology-Driven Solutions:** Incorporate predictive modeling to assess long-term sustainability of restoration efforts.

Output: Finalized restoration plan ready for implementation.

Implementation and Monitoring Phase

Objective: Execute the restoration plan and monitor its effectiveness over time.

Steps:

- **Restoration Activities:** Implement approved restoration projects, ensuring adherence to timelines and budgets.
- **Performance Metrics:** Establish measurable indicators for restoration success (e.g., vegetation regrowth rates, water quality improvement).
- **Ongoing Monitoring:** Conduct regular site visits and data collection to track progress.
- **Adaptive Management:** Modify restoration activities as needed based on monitoring results.
- **Confidentiality Agreements:** Ensure negotiated settlements with responsible parties include clear confidentiality clauses to protect sensitive information during and after implementation. This confidentiality must be reinforced by statutory provisions.
- **Reporting:** Develop and publish annual reports detailing progress, challenges, and any adjustments made to restoration activities.
- **Collaborative Feedback:** Gather input from stakeholders during monitoring to ensure goals remain aligned.
- **Technology Integration:** Use automated systems to collect and analyze monitoring data in real time.

Output: Annual progress reports demonstrating restoration effectiveness and compliance with restoration goals.

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE FOUNDATIONS

Statutory Authority

The proposed framework draws on LOSCO's statutory authority under R.S. 30:2456-2468, which includes:

- Developing state contingency plans for oil spill response while separating emergency response functions from the assessment process to ensure clear operational focus.
- Coordinating interagency efforts for natural resource damage assessments, transitioning to a broader assessment language that reflects state-specific needs.

- Utilizing the Natural Resources Trust Authority as a more adaptable funding mechanism, replacing reliance on the Natural Resource Restoration Trust Fund.
- Establishing a prospective administrative process to address impacts from saltwater discharges associated with commercial operations, reducing the dependency on judicial remedies.
- Leveraging stakeholder input to create transparent and informed administrative solutions.
- Facilitating interagency collaboration to centralize resources and expertise, reducing redundancies, and fostering a consistent, standardized framework for addressing disputes.

Regulatory Alignment

Ensure the framework does not conflict but aligns with:

- Louisiana Administrative Code Title 43, Part I (Natural Resources).
- Federal OPA NRDA procedures (15 CFR Part 990).

Budgeting and Funding Mechanisms

- **Oil Spill Contingency Fund (R.S. 30:2483):** Supports assessment and restoration activities.
- **Cost Recovery:** Seek compensation from responsible parties for assessment and restoration expenses.
- **Innovative Financing:** Explore public-private partnerships and alternative funding models to support long-term restoration initiatives.
- **Administrative Penalties:** Introduce administrative penalties for non-compliance with assessment or restoration requirements, ensuring accountability.
- **Dedicated Technology Funds:** Allocate resources for integrating advanced tools and methods into assessment processes.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

- **Interagency Collaboration:** Ensure coordination with CPRA, DEQ, and local agencies to create a unified administrative framework that minimizes conflicts and promotes efficiency.
- **Technology Integration:** Leverage GIS, remote sensing, and data analytics to enhance assessment accuracy.
- **Community Involvement:** Engage local stakeholders through workshops and transparent communication channels to expedite consistent remedies and adjudication processes.
- **Capacity Building:** Develop training programs for local agencies and community organizations to support assessment and restoration efforts.
- **Data Sharing Platforms:** Establish centralized databases for storing and sharing assessment and restoration data among stakeholders.
- **Administrative Transition:** Gradually shift the state's reliance on judicial remedies to a robust administrative framework to address commercial saltwater discharges efficiently and proactively.

- **Consensus Building:** Use stakeholder feedback mechanisms to align on processes, ensuring broad support and compliance.
- **Enhanced Public Awareness:** Use educational campaigns to inform the public about the assessment process and its benefits.

This framework equips Louisiana with a structured and effective methodology to assess and address saltwater and oil damages, ensuring the preservation and restoration of the state’s vital natural resources. By leveraging LOSCO’s statutory authority and aligning with best practices, the framework fosters resilience, accountability, and sustainable resource management. The inclusion of advanced technologies, interagency collaboration, and robust monitoring protocols further strengthens the state’s capacity to address complex environmental challenges and safeguard its ecological and economic future. Additionally, by transitioning from reliance on judicial remedies to a robust administrative framework, the state sets a precedent for proactive governance and equitable resource management, ensuring long-term sustainability.

5.5 CONCLUSION

The DRIVE Initiative embodies a paradigm shift in Louisiana’s resource management strategy, prioritizing equity, resilience, and innovation. By integrating advanced planning, robust funding mechanisms, and collaborative governance, the initiative addresses systemic challenges with precision and foresight. Its holistic approach ensures sustainable flood protection, efficient resource utilization, and economic vitality across the state.

Through transformative policies and strategic partnerships, Louisiana will not only overcome immediate hurdles but also set a national precedent for adaptive and intuitive resource management. The DRIVE Initiative secures a prosperous, resilient future for all Louisianans while serving as a model of environmental stewardship and governance excellence.

CHAPTER 6 – STRATEGIC VISION: INSTITUTE OF ENERGY & CONSERVATION

6.1 MISSION AND STRUCTURE

The Institute of Energy and Conservation (IEC) represents a transformative initiative designed to centralize and elevate Louisiana’s energy and natural resource management. Tasked with integrating technology, advanced research, and data management, the IEC aspires to establish standards paralleling those of world-class national laboratories. Its mission is deeply rooted in interdisciplinary collaboration across academic, governmental, and private sectors to address the multifaceted environmental and energy challenges facing Louisiana. By fostering a culture of innovation and resilience, the IEC aims to position the state as a global leader in hydrogeologic resource management.

The IEC’s operational model integrates scientific organizations connected to the Department by subject matter and funding, aligning them with strategic planning to create a robust framework for excellence in data management and practical application while ensuring public access. Serving as a central entity to support and supplement the Department of Energy and Conservation, the IEC facilitates research, technology integration, data management, and public engagement. It houses key organizations and promotes collaboration among state resources, private partners, and research institutions. This structure enhances efficiency while driving innovation and economic growth.

INSTITUTE OF ENERGY AND CONSERVATION

- Formal Academic and Research Institute
- Supporting the Department of Energy and Conservation with the ultimate goal of creating a national lab type organization
- Modeled after the Bureau of Economic Geology in Texas
- Strategic Alignment of Academic Organizations
 - Center for Energy Studies
 - Water Resources Research Institute
 - Louisiana Geological Survey
 - Institute for Energy Innovation
 - Center for River Studies

6.2 GOVERNANCE

The governance structure of the IEC is designed to centralize decision-making and foster collaboration across key state and private sector stakeholders. The foundation serves as the central entity to support and supplement the Department of Energy and Conservation by facilitating research, technology integration, data management, and public engagement. This public-private structure will unite academic institutions, state agencies, and industry leaders under a shared mission.

At the core is the *Board of Trustees*, which includes voting, non-voting, and advisory members who oversee the strategic direction, major project approvals, and alignment of goals while ensuring accountability for all activities under the foundation.

The *Executive Leadership Team*, led by an Executive Director, manages daily operations and implements Board decisions. Roles include guiding technology integration, financial management, public engagement, and commercialization of research outputs. Advisory committees focus on technology, research, and public policy, providing specialized input to drive the IEC's initiatives.

6.3 PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

The IEC will unify and amplify the capabilities of Louisiana's leading research and operational entities, creating a cohesive framework to advance energy and conservation goals.

CORE ORGANIZATIONS

- ***Center for Energy Studies***: This entity will drive economic and policy analyses, providing the foundation for sustainable energy frameworks and guiding informed policymaking.
- ***Water Resources Research Institute***: Focused on flood mitigation, watershed management, and sustainable water resource utilization, the Institute will tackle Louisiana's unique hydrological challenges with innovative solutions.
- ***Louisiana Geological Survey***: As the cornerstone of geological research and data management, the Survey will enable evidence-based decision-making critical to resource extraction, land management, and environmental protection.
- ***Institute for Energy Innovation***: This body will lead advancements in renewable energy technologies, carbon capture, and energy storage systems, placing Louisiana at the forefront of global energy innovation.
- ***Center for River Studies***: By expanding beyond flood protection to include navigation systems, this Center will integrate engineering, ecological, and economic strategies to enhance Louisiana's waterway resilience

ASSOCIATED ORGANIZATION

- ***The Water Institute of the Gulf***: Serving dual roles as a research leader and commercialization hub, the Institute will translate groundbreaking research into actionable solutions for coastal and environmental sustainability, securing additional revenue streams to reinvest in state priorities.

6.4 GOALS AND BENEFITS

The IEC seeks to establish itself as a globally recognized authority in energy innovation, conservation science, and integrated resource management. Consolidating geological data management and aligning research with technological advancements will foster enhanced policymaking and collaboration across sectors.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- **Economic Growth**: Generate substantial revenue through the commercialization of intellectual property, consulting services, and strategic partnerships. Position Louisiana as a hub for energy and environmental innovation to attract global investments and catalyze job creation.
- **Transparency and Engagement**: Develop publicly accessible platforms for resource visualization, enhancing stakeholder trust and fostering community participation in environmental stewardship.
- **Collaboration and Innovation**: Forge robust public-private partnerships and align state research initiatives to create a national lab-quality institute focused on innovation in hydrogeologic ecosystems. Address complex challenges through interdisciplinary collaboration, ensuring Louisiana's leadership in sustainable development.

Through its adaptive and forward-looking approach, the IEC aims to meet Louisiana's pressing resource challenges while laying the foundation for a prosperous and sustainable future. By leveraging its diverse expertise and strategic focus, the IEC will remain a beacon of innovation in the ever-evolving landscape of energy and conservation.

CHAPTER 7 – TACTICAL PLAN

In developing the response to Executive Order JML-13, the Department has conducted an extensive and inclusive process to ensure the final proposal reflects the needs and concerns of Louisiana’s diverse stakeholders. This process has been marked by transparency, adaptability, and a commitment to addressing all feedback thoughtfully and systematically. By prioritizing transparency, we ensured the timely publication of content and addressed inconsistencies with intent through real-time amendments. Our approach underscores our dedication to both the practical and aspirational aspects of governance, weaving the complexities of stakeholder input into a coherent and actionable plan.

7.1 HOLISTIC STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Feedback was collected through a multifaceted approach designed to reach as many impacted parties as possible. This included town halls held with employees across divisions, meetings scheduled with every departmental division, and comprehensive public engagement efforts involving workshops, surveys, and comment periods. These initiatives were not just procedural—they were strategic opportunities to uncover nuanced insights into operational inefficiencies, interdepartmental communication challenges, and areas ripe for innovation. By hosting town halls, we were able to gather direct feedback from frontline employees who provided invaluable insights into operational challenges and opportunities. Every division was engaged to ensure that no perspective was overlooked, highlighting a genuine commitment to inclusivity.

EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

The depth of this engagement extended well beyond internal channels. External stakeholders were equally engaged through an array of mechanisms. Town halls with industry representatives, consultations with academic experts, and public forums with community groups ensured that voices from all sectors were heard. Stakeholders like *The Tulane Environmental Law Center* highlighted the importance of integrating alternative energy sources and raised concerns about prioritizing industrial water use. The *Pontchartrain Conservancy* supported CPRA independence and emphasized enforcement, while *The Louisiana Wildlife Federation* advocated for clarity in the scope of URMA’s authority. These examples illustrate the depth of collaboration underpinning this effort.

By gathering this comprehensive feedback, the Department created a stakeholder ecosystem where each participant, from grassroots organizers to major industry players, could articulate their priorities and concerns. This enabled us to address both broad policy goals and fine-grained operational needs in a synchronized manner.

INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

Internal alignment was achieved through deliberate and inclusive employee engagement strategies. The Department organized town halls with employees from all divisions, creating a forum for direct dialogue. Employees were encouraged to share their insights into operational inefficiencies, resource allocation, and opportunities for modernization. This process empowered employees to actively shape the organizational restructuring plan, ensuring it reflected on-the-ground realities. These discussions brought to light a number of systemic challenges and practical solutions, which directly influenced the final draft of the reorganization.

Employee Survey

The Department complemented these discussions with a comprehensive employee survey. *Key findings:*

- **Career Development and Resources:** Many employees expressed a desire for more robust training and professional development programs. Respondents felt this would enhance their ability to grow within the Department.
- **Clarity of Roles:** A significant portion of employees noted the need for clearer job descriptions and better alignment of responsibilities to roles. This feedback emphasized the importance of integrating detailed job functions into the reorganization.
- **Work-Life Balance:** Respondents frequently highlighted the benefits of telework policies, with many noting that the option to work from home significantly improved their work-life balance. However, some employees raised concerns about inconsistencies in policy application.
- **Policy Management:** Feedback about overtime and K-Time policies revealed mixed sentiments. While some employees felt these policies were managed fairly, others reported frustrations with perceived inequities.
- **Environmental Stewardship:** Employees generally felt positive about the Department's approach to environmental stewardship and resource conservation, though some expressed concerns about aligning industry interests with public welfare.
- **Satisfaction and Recommendations:** A majority of employees expressed overall satisfaction with their roles and recommended the Department as an employer, though pay and resource constraints were noted as areas for improvement.

These insights were instrumental in tailoring the reorganization proposal to address both internal and external needs. For example, calls for improved IT systems and centralized communications teams were integrated into the plan to enhance operational efficiency and transparency. The alignment of employee expectations with broader organizational goals demonstrates the Department's commitment to fostering a culture of accountability and mutual growth.

7.2 COMPLETED PHASES

This inclusive process aligns with the broader tactical plan that underpins the reorganization; these are actions that have taken place.

PHASED TIMELINE

Phase 1: Q4 2023

- Initiate the DRIVE initiative with comprehensive data collection and stakeholder mapping.
- Conduct baseline analyses to identify redundancies and inefficiencies in governance and operations.
- Hold initial employee town halls and launch preliminary surveys to gather foundational input.

Phase 2: Q1 2024

- Begin drafting structural frameworks and develop an inventory of statutes and regulations requiring review.
- Engage external stakeholders through workshops and targeted consultations.
- Develop cross-functional teams to validate findings and outline key priorities for reform.

Phase 3: Q2 2024

- Host in-depth workshops with internal divisions to refine operational structures.
- Conduct data-driven assessments to prioritize statutory revisions and align them with strategic goals.
- Draft detailed implementation guidelines and pilot key administrative processes.

Phase 4: Q3 2024

- Launch town halls and stakeholder forums alongside internal training programs for new roles and responsibilities.
- Finalize and test proposed administrative frameworks in pilot settings.
- Draft the DENR report and prepare for broader legislative engagement.

Phase 5: Q4 2024

- Conduct public forums to refine proposed bills and gather final feedback from stakeholders.
- Initiate cross-departmental training sessions and IT modernization efforts.
- Finalize the DRIVE report and prepare for implementation in 2025.

7.3 IMPLEMENTING PHASE 6

During the next phase, the DRIVE initiative will work on implementation of approved changes with the legislature.

The objective of this initiative is to address inefficiencies in Louisiana's Revised Statutes and Administrative Code through comprehensive restructuring. The goal is to enhance resource management,

modernize governance mechanisms, streamline operations, and foster adaptability to future challenges. This initiative also aims to build a resilient framework capable of supporting long-term strategic objectives while meeting immediate operational needs.

The comprehensive plan begins with an inventory of statutes and regulations, compiling a detailed catalog categorized by operational impact and regulatory authority. This inventory will identify outdated, conflicting, or redundant statutes, prioritizing them for review and revision. It ensures the inventory reflects current operational realities and emerging governance trends. The gap and overlap analysis will identify conflicts, redundancies, and inefficiencies within statutory and regulatory provisions to ensure consistency and coherence. Advanced analytical tools will map overlaps, and cross-functional teams will validate findings to recommend targeted interventions.

Revisions will be prioritized based on their impact on resource management, public safety, and economic development. The plan will focus on high-impact areas requiring immediate attention and develop a phased prioritization plan for effective implementation. Streamlining and simplification will propose revisions or repeals to create a cohesive governance framework, supplemented by user-friendly guidelines and training programs to build organizational capacity.

New provisions will clearly delineate the roles of the Legislature (policy-setting) and the Executive (implementation) to avoid overlap and confusion. Aligning these provisions with modern governance practices and industry standards will include mechanisms for regular reviews, updates, and performance metrics to ensure accountability. Stakeholder validation will involve circulating draft revisions for feedback from industry experts, community representatives, and policymakers. Public consultations, workshops, and an online feedback portal will broaden participation and foster transparency.

Phased implementation will begin with high-priority areas, monitored through performance metrics and assessments. Pilot programs will test processes, refining them based on outcomes, with a dedicated team overseeing the implementation and addressing challenges in real time. Annual review cycles will ensure alignment with evolving needs and emerging trends. Regular reviews will incorporate stakeholder feedback, and annual progress reports will maintain accountability and public engagement.

PROPOSED TIMELINE

Q1 2025

- **January:** Prepare draft bills and engage legislative stakeholders through targeted presentations and discussions. Organize public forums to build support for the DRIVE initiatives.
- **February:** Refine bill drafts based on feedback and secure support for the DRIVE package through strategic outreach and advocacy. Host collaborative sessions with industry experts to refine legislative proposals.
- **March:** Finalize and file bills; intensify outreach efforts for buy-in from key stakeholders, including community leaders and industry representatives. Launch public awareness campaigns to highlight the benefits of the proposed changes.

Q2 2025

- **April:** Convene the 2025 Regular Session (April 14). Present DRIVE initiatives to legislative committees for review and approval. Provide comprehensive briefing documents to legislators and key stakeholders.
- **May:** Implement Phase 6 initiatives, focusing on operational integration and alignment with newly established structures. Begin cross-departmental training sessions to ensure smooth transitions.
- **June:** Adjourn the Regular Session (June 12) and commence detailed planning for post-session implementation. Evaluate legislative outcomes and adjust strategies as needed.

Q3 2025

- **July:** Implement new organizational changes, including revised job descriptions, updated workflows, and enhanced IT systems to support efficiency. Begin post-implementation reviews and identify areas for improvement.

Organizational changes, including revised job descriptions, updated workflows, and enhanced IT systems to support efficiency, will be implemented by the third quarter of 2025. Post-implementation reviews will identify areas for improvement, ensuring a smooth transition and operational alignment.

7.4 RESPONSIVENESS

From the outset, we have worked to address stakeholder feedback dynamically. Comments ranged from technical concerns, such as the integration of engineering and geology functions within the Office of Conservation, to broader governance issues, including the authority and role of the proposed Natural Resources Commission. These insights directly influenced revisions, ensuring the final proposal is both comprehensive and practical.

TO PUBLIC COMMENTS

Highlights of public engagement include:

- **Clear Communication:** Stakeholders like the OC emphasized the need for a dedicated communications team, which has been incorporated to enhance transparency and public trust.
- **Organizational Integrity:** Concerns about separating engineering and geology functions were met with assurances that joint decision-making frameworks would be maintained.
- **Operational Efficiency:** Support for GIS integration and IT modernization underscores the need for enhanced technological capabilities to streamline operations.

FLEXIBILITY AND REAL-TIME ADJUSTMENTS

The drafting process has exemplified the core goal of this plan: flexibility in meeting the needs of the state and its citizens. By iterating on stakeholder feedback, we have ensured that the proposal not only aligns with immediate objectives but also remains adaptable to future challenges. This iterative process serves as a microcosm of the proposed governance model, which prioritizes responsiveness and sustainability.

7.5 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the response to JML-13 has been crafted as a living document—shaped by continuous feedback and reflective of Louisiana’s dynamic needs. By engaging a wide array of stakeholders and incorporating their input into every stage of development, we have laid the groundwork for a proposal that is inclusive, practical, and forward-thinking. As we move forward, this approach will guide implementation, ensuring that every decision aligns with the overarching mission of enhancing resource management for the benefit of all Louisianans. By embedding adaptability and fostering collaboration at every level, this plan not only addresses current challenges but also positions the state for long-term success in managing its invaluable resources.

CHAPTER 8 – CONCLUSION

The DRIVE Initiative represents a bold and visionary investment in Louisiana’s future. It is not merely a response to today’s challenges but a proactive strategy for establishing a proposed governmental framework that can ensure long-term sustainability, resilience, and prosperity. Through the realignment of governance frameworks, modernization of operational systems, and emphasis on collaborative and transparent practices, the Department of Energy and Natural Resources, as the new Department of Energy and Conservation, is poised to become a model of effective and innovative resource stewardship.

This initiative underscores Louisiana’s commitment to preserving its natural heritage while fostering economic resilience and environmental integrity. By addressing inefficiencies, leveraging modern technologies, and promoting cross-agency collaboration, the DRIVE Initiative ensures that Louisiana’s natural resources are managed with precision, responsibility, and foresight.

As Louisiana transitions into this new era of resource management, it does so with a renewed sense of purpose and vision. The DRIVE Initiative is a testament to the state’s dedication to excellence and its recognition of the vital role that natural resources play in shaping both its identity and its future. Through strategic foresight and collective effort, Louisiana is not only addressing present needs but also laying the foundation for a thriving and sustainable legacy that will benefit generations to come.

APPENDICES

TABLE OF STATUTES AND AUTHORITIES

Amendments Needed:

- R.S. 30:1 – Establishment of Office of Conservation and authority of Commissioner of Conservation
- R.S. 30:2 – Prohibition of waste of oil and gas
- R.S. 30:3 – Definitions R.S. 30:4 – Authority of the Commissioner – prevention of waste, rulemaking authority, well construction requirements, plugging requirements, financial security requirements, certain pipeline requirements, brine disposal regulation, etc.
- R.S. 30:4.1 -- Authority to permit and regulate hazardous waste underground injection disposal
- R.S. 30:4.3 -- Authority to require financial security
- R.S. 30:5 – Authority over carbon black, gas recycling and unit operations
- R.S. 30:5.1 -- Deep pool wells and ultra-deep structure unitization authority
- R.S. 30:5.2 -- Coal seam natural gas producing areas and unitization authority
- R.S. 30:6 – Authority to conduct evidentiary hearings on matters under Commissioner’s jurisdiction
- R.S. 30:6.1 -- Emergency Authority
- R.S. 30:7 – Authority to fix production allowables
- R.S. 30:8 – Authority to issue subpoenas
- R.S. 30:9 – 11.1 – Unit and pooling authority
- R.S. 30:12 -16 – Judicial Review Process, citizen suits, and appeals process
- R.S. 30:19 – Prohibition of the sale of illegal gas
- R.S. 30:21 – Authority for fees and other charges
- R.S. 30:22 – 23.1 -- Regulation of underground storage of liquid and gaseous substances
- R.S. 30:25 – closure of production pits in wetlands
- R.S. 30:26 & 28 – Permit authority for E&P wells
- R.S. 30:31 – 34 – Well closure requirement authority
- R.S. 30:41 – Common purchaser law authority for natural gas
- R.S. 30:82-89 – Oilfield Site Restoration Program – Regulation of Orphaned Oilfield Sites
- R.S. 38:3098.2 – Powers of the Department of Energy and Natural Resources
- R.S. 30:550 – Authority Over Intrastate Gas Pipelines
- R.S. 30:901, et seq – Surface Mining Act
- R.S. 49: 214.21, et seq – Coastal Zone Management Program
- Key sections of the Louisiana Administrative Code that support this framework include:
 - Title 43, Part VI – Water Resources Management
 - Title 43, Part XIX – General Operations, including Statewide Order 29-B

- Title 43, Part XV – Surface Mining
 - Title 43, Part XVII – Underground Injection Control
 - Title 43 Part IX – Natural Gas Policy Act
 - Title 43, Part XI – Pipelines⁸
 - Title 43, Part VII – Coastal Management
- R.S. 30:1-3 – General provisions
 - R.S. 30:4.2 – Enforcement of wildlife and fisheries laws
 - R.S. 30: 6 – 6.1 – Due process procedure, declarations of emergency
 - R.S. 30:8 – Subpoenas, service, enforcement of subpoenas
 - R.S. 30:12 – 24 – Legal remedies, penalties, underground storage
 - R.S. 30:27 – Authorization to enter lands of another
 - R.S. 30:32 – 34 – Burning of well, Plugging and Abandonment
 - R.S. 30:45 – Enforcement by Commissioner
 - R.S. 30:103.2 – Failure to report
 - R.S. 30:104 – Failure to report, fine
 - R.S. 30:412 – Measure of damages for failure to supply
 - R.S. 30:501 – 504 – Natural Resources and Energy Act
 - R.S. 30:542 – Administration and enforcement
 - R.S. 30:544 – Violation, penalties, civil and criminal
 - R.S. 30:560 – 561 – Pipeline Safety and Inspection fees, collection.
 - R.S. 30:603 – 606 – Investigations, Hearings, Rehearings
 - R.S. 30:704 – 705 – Administration and enforcement, violations, penalties
 - R.S. 30:917 – 921 – Inspections & monitoring, Penalties, Enforcement
 - R.S. 30:1101, et seq – Louisiana Geologic Sequestration of Carbon Dioxide Act

⁸ Shared with Office of Enforcement.