

From: [Climate](#)
To: [Allison DeJong](#)
Subject: Fw: Comments on Draft Annual Climate Report
Date: Monday, January 9, 2023 8:33:58 AM

From: Michael Tritico <michaeltritico@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, December 30, 2022 10:17 AM
To: Climate
Subject: Comments on Draft Annual Climate Report

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December 30, 2022

Governor's Climate Initiative Task Force
climate@la.gov

Comments on Draft Annual Report

Dear Governor John Bel Edwards and Climate Initiative Task Force:

I have reviewed the 24 page Draft Annual Report. Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments.

One of the three Policy Pillars relied upon throughout the report as essential to meeting the Governor's goals for zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 is "clean hydrogen." Although "*green hydrogen*" is one kind of "clean hydrogen," *produced without the use of any fossil fuels*, the other kind of so-called "clean hydrogen," known as "blue hydrogen," still requires fossil fuel and also requires the energy-intensive carbon capture and sequestration processes. Therefore the *only* way that the "clean hydrogen" Policy Pillar could be anything but a weakening, status quo sustaining pillar would be if the Governor makes clear that he is *insisting on "green hydrogen" and nothing less*.

The other two Policy Pillars are excellent, Renewable Energy Generation and Industrial Electrification. In fact, a recent application for an air permit from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, showed that one company is indeed thinking ahead. The application for the Indian Bayou natural gas compressor station said that it plans to use electrically-driven compressors instead of the traditional fossil fuel fired turbine compressors. That presents an opportunity for LDEQ to tell all new applicants that the Best Available Control Technology for air emissions (including greenhouse gases) is the proven, approved, and operating electrically driven mechanism.

Page 4 of the report begins to reveal something unfortunate that permeates the thinking of the Task Force: reliance upon taxpayer subsidies for what the industries *should* pay for themselves in a free enterprise, capitalistic economic system. Constant allocation of tax dollars for implementation of climate initiative goals actually converts the economic system to socialism. If the industries are sincere in agreeing to participate in diminishing their 2/3 contribution to our State's greenhouse gas emissions, they must decide if they are capitalists or socialists and be transparent about it to the public.

Page 6 of the report describes several solar project plans across Louisiana but fails to mention the problems of two that were attempted in Southwest Louisiana. One met with opposition from neighbors who had various misgivings. The other is stalled probably because it was to be right across the street

from the end of the main runway of the Lake Charles Municipal airport and therefore might have created glare and reflections just as pilots were attempting to land or take off. Good ideas need to be well-thought-out and presented or they become counterproductive.

Page 7 raises a question: will too much concentration on “microgrids” detract from and retard the evolution of a far-less-vulnerable Master Grid for delivering electricity statewide?

Another question raised by the discussion of renewable energy planning is the anti-green lobbying that has taken place at the State Legislature and the Public Service Commission. There are special interests in Louisiana who feel that their shortsighted investments in depletable resources are threatened by sustainable, renewable energy concepts. All the sensible intentions the Governor might have and might work to make happen could be blocked by those people with limited intellect.

Page 6 mentions the volatility of the natural gas market. Not only is that finite, depletable resource prone to speculative greed, it should be reserved for its highest and best use, as a building block for production of fertilizer (Haber-Bosch Process) for growing food crops. For *every shipload* of Liquefied Natural Gas that gets exported from Cameron Parish, mankind *loses* the ability to grow 200 million servings of rice. That is a very good reason to strictly regulate the depletable methane molecule all along its “upstream, midstream, and downstream” travels. Doing that would keep the shifting of natural gas away from the American home heaters to foreign countries, keeping our heating bills reasonable and keeping the world's food costs from continuing to inflate – as well as stopping the delay in a sensible State and worldwide transition to renewable energy sources.

The recent announcement of Federal leasing of an offshore area south of Lake Charles for wind generation of electricity creates what is likely to be a false hope since the location is already congested by marine traffic and the impacts on the Flower Gardens Marine Sanctuary have not been investigated.

Pages 10 and 11 introduce the idea of an Industrial Electrification Analysis for each facility in the State to assess its electrification potential. That is probably necessary since the companies themselves would want to preserve the status quo and would deny the potential or resist any short term electrification costs.

Page 13, on the issue of “orphan well” methane emission control, again assumes that *company responsibilities* will have to be accomplished with taxpayer money. Maybe the best initial use of incoming Federal tax money for that purpose would be to track down the original parents of the orphans even if those parents are now fathering other enterprises and make them pay or at least not be given any new permissions for any new projects.

Page 13 makes one wonder, given the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality's talent for taking many years to comply with Federal guidances, whether or not there will be methane constraints actually in air permits before 2050. Would 2030 be too much to hope for?

The fact that other states have already imposed and proved legal and enforceable: bans on “venting and flaring of oil and gas from facilities to reduce methane comprehensively” should give LDEQ and LDNR the courage to do the same thing, if they really intend to participate in the efforts to make Louisiana a leader in the fight to control climate change.

Page 14 and nowhere else in the report do I see anything discouraging building in places vulnerable to storm surges or runoff flooding. The more those places are developed the more money will be wasted trying to protect them and the fewer places there will be for natural sequestration of carbon.

Pages 14 and 15 show that Southwest Louisiana is leaving itself out of developments of mass transit, pedestrian, and bicycle route infrastructure. That may be yet another symptom of the region's sense of subjugation to the petrochemical industry, sort of like a slave afraid to ask his master for something not freely-offered.

Page 15 Even though the tugboats in Southwest Louisiana will be given a way to rest their engines while docked and operate their lights and other onboard facilities using power connections to the shore grid, the big ships at the docks of the several different refineries and other docks at numerous different petrochemical plants and bulk terminals will still be idling constantly putting out greenhouse gases 8,760 hours a year.

Page 16 It is interesting to see the new selling point for wetlands restoration, as carbon sequestration sites. However, promoting Beneficial Use of Dredged Material (BUDM) is sort of ridiculous since the dredging changes the ecosystem more than the few acres of marsh can offset. Similarly, leasing State waterbottoms for wind farms will just mean more canals dug through the wetlands causing the usual major destructions.

Page 16 Something seems almost comic about a New Orleans outfit planning to teach Louisiana farmers how to be climate-smart.

Page 17 The *serial ruination* of “restoration sites” in coastal Louisiana by recurring tropical storms is likely

to prevent any realistic involvement of Louisiana wetlands in the “global carbon offset markets.”

Page 18 Making a low-carbon economy “inclusive” by providing retraining to shuffle workers during the transition to a sustainable economy that does not ruin the planet is a good idea, especially if the people take advantage of the opportunities. Likely too many of them will continue to expect someone else to do their homework for them and will therefore continue to be herded away from transition by the fossil-fuel/petrochemical barons.

Pages 18 and 19 Your mention of universities that are participating in the forward-moving elements of transition somehow puts into the rear-facing spotlight McNeese State University which has been bragging about its new LNG Center for Excellence. Similarly, SOWELA Tech, the local community college in Southwest Louisiana, brags about its partnership with oil and gas pipeline companies. Those two schools will help retard movement toward renewable energy development and therefore will aid and abet the continuation of global warming, sea level rise, more and worse hurricanes... yet they will pretend to be ignorant of any liabilities.

Page 22 Not just new energy and infrastructure projects, but also *any new industrial project* should be subject to the strategy of equitable, efficient, and sustainable siting and permitting.

The concept of “accountability” is important but “to whom” is just as important. Industrial entities have proven that they believe they have rights beyond those of individual living beings. The only way to bring those entities under control will be to use big sticks since they laugh at carrot incentives even as they gobble them up and keep doing what they please. Impose *mandatory compliance schedules* for individual companies to attain specific goals required by the need to attain zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 or earlier as conditions may dictate.

Expecting State Agencies as they are now staffed to actually be an effective team in moving honestly and efficiently toward the goals of the Governor and his Climate Initiative Task Force is *fantasy*. There must be an almost complete replacement of the existing agents who are programmed to think in the backward ways of a depletable-resource-based economic system, not in renewable, life-sustainable, climate-friendly ways.

Thank you again for the opportunity to submit comments.

Sincerely,

Michael Tritico, Biologist and President of RESTORE
Restore Explicit Symmetry To Our Ravaged Earth

From: [Climate](#)
To: [Allison DeJong](#)
Subject: Fw: Comments on Draft EIS Calcasieu River Interstate 10 Bridge Project
Date: Monday, January 9, 2023 8:33:29 AM

From: Michael Tritico <michaeltritico@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, December 23, 2022 10:39 AM
Subject: Fw: Comments on Draft EIS Calcasieu River Interstate 10 Bridge Project

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Endlessly ignored. Comment deadline this afternoon.

Michael Tritico
Restore Explicit Symmetry To Our Ravaged Earth

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Michael Tritico <michaeltritico@yahoo.com>
To: CalcasieuBridge <calcasieubridge@hntb.com>; dotdcs@la.gov <dotdcs@la.gov>;
execsecretariat.fhwa@dot.gov <execsecretariat.fhwa@dot.gov>
Sent: Thursday, December 22, 2022 at 01:13:04 PM CST
Subject: Comments on Draft EIS Calcasieu River Interstate 10 Bridge Project

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12/22/2022

HNTB
10000 Perkins Road Suite 640
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Re: I-10 Bridge Draft EIS State DOTD Project Number H00393
Dear LADOTD, Federal Highway Administration, and HTNB:
I have been saying, I believe since before 2002 when you announced some "alternatives," and after that in the Public Meetings and written comment periods that *"Since there is no practical way to keep the river crossing where it now exists, the logical thing is to re-locate Interstate 10 to high and solid ground north of the present location."*
Once I even provided you with a detailed route of that north loop that would be only a very few miles longer than the route that you insist on perpetuating along with all of its problems.
No matter what comments I have submitted on overall concepts or on specific details you have refused to acknowledge them or to incorporate into your work any alternatives that the comments would have generated had you taken them seriously.
I was unable to attend the Public Meeting this time but I read a newspaper article which said that the main topic of the evening was your insistence on making the project one to be financed by tolls. The longer you piddle around the greater will be the tolls that you will demand in order to pay for a route that should be

junked.

I am not sure why I should bother going through your Draft EIS and submitting comments since you will disregard any public comments that worry you and make you have to reconsider your pre-conceived plans. However, I will try again for a few things:

From the Draft's PDF Page 53 your latest chosen alternative is called 5G. It includes many sub-projects in addition to the river crossing. Those inclusions, in reality, are more necessary from the perspective of lining up support from different stakeholder groups than they are from the perspective of preparing a plan to provide the public with a safe way to get from one side of the Calcasieu River to the other, past the failing bridge.

Although it did make sense, once you had locked in a decision to demand a river crossing at the existing location and had disregarded other routes, to have included the attempt to de-bottleneck the railroad mess in Westlake, other problems, such as the truck-rollover mess in North Lake Charles have simply delayed your focus on the central problem, the unsafe bridge.

Trying to build a new bridge where there are insoluble problems is a waste of time.

PDF Pages 12 and 13 begin to highlight the reality that your current chosen alternative is fraught with hazardous waste impediments, 23 (twenty-three) different sites of concern.

PDF Pages 34 then admits that "The major unresolved issue has been and continues to be the risks related to the EDC that has contaminated the soils and groundwater within the existing and proposed Right of Way."

Of course, that massive, widespread and deep saturation of the entire area of and around the existing bridge and its western approach, including the proposed Samson Street sub-project, with Ethylene Dichloride should have been sufficient reason for you to choose an alternative on high, solid ground to the north of Lake Charles and Westlake.

PDF Page 33 has an interesting sidestep: None of the alternatives "would meet the last purpose goal d) safety concerns." Therefore, a lot of busy work was done but the public still ends up with an unsafe route. Putting a new, safe bridge at the chosen latitude just cannot be done.

PDF Page 72 The preferred alternative has abandoned the concept of pedestrian and bicycle river crossings as part of the proposed bridge complex. PDF Page 34 discussed that situation and seems to half-heartedly suggest that maybe later there might be some way to consider the public's expressed interest in such a feature. Less half-heartedly the discussion gives several reasons the public should not keep its hope up so at least we know not to expect that crossing to happen. That is just another example of how pointless are the public comment opportunities.

Why you keep having these presentations and comment opportunities decade-after-decade only to disregard *reality* is as much of a problem as is the fact that the existing bridge is likely, before you ever get through with the planning process, to finish falling in slow motion because of the EDC ruination of its soil support. When that collapse happens the public record will show how hard people tried to get something actual done but how the planners could not accept the most critical facts.

Sincerely,

Michael Tritico, Biologist and President of RESTORE
Restore Explicit Symmetry To Our Ravaged Earth



December 21, 2022

To: Louisiana Climate Initiatives Task Force, Office of the Governor

The Louisiana Environmental Action Network (LEAN) and Lower Mississippi Riverkeeper (LMRK) submit the following comments on the Draft 2022 Annual Report.

The Report provides a helpful summary of the activities, initiatives, and opportunities underway as 2022 draws to a close. Foremost among the opportunities are federal funds now available from recently passed federal legislation such as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

An important area of opportunity for achieving near-term Greenhouse Gas (GHG) reductions comes from recent new federal funding and new federal rules for methane. The report states that at least 4,500 orphaned oil and gas wells are located in Louisiana, and describes how the state is utilizing federal funds (an initial \$25 million grant) to “plug” these wells, and that new funding will be coming.

The prioritization of low-income communities both for sealing orphaned wells and workforce development is an important component. LEAN has worked with local communities for over 30 years to address pollution and health concerns tied to industrial pollution, and with new funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will be able to help these residents expand the capacity for community air testing.

We also continue to monitor and assess air pollution permits in Louisiana, where major GHG emitting facilities continue to be approved. These include the Nucor Steel Louisiana facility in Convent, LA, which would increase its CO₂ equivalent releases by 799,360 tons per year, for a total of 1,836,750 tons, and was recently penalized for air pollution violations by the EPA

Protection of natural lands is another area of heightened importance. The report mentions the Louisiana Outdoors Forever Program as a major conservation initiative that will be underway in the state. It is worth mentioning as well that the ongoing loss of natural areas, agricultural land, and watersheds to development factors into loss of carbon sequestration from these resources. The mention of biofuel production brings up the consideration of including the full cycle of such industrial activity and its environmental impacts in determining its benefits for carbon sequestration.

We have encouraged Louisiana to adopt a constructive approach to engagement with the federal government on climate policy, and partnering with the Biden Administration, highlighted in the Collaboration and Partnership chapter is a positive change for the state. The White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) had formed a partnership for coastal restoration and sustainability with the state following Hurricane Katrina, a collaboration which was dissolved under the Jindal administration following the BP disaster.

Finally, we ask that the importance of the near-term GHG reduction targets under the Plan – 2025 and 2030 - be the main focus as we enter 2023, since these represent tangible, measurable milestones for reducing emissions in Louisiana.

Sincerely,

Marylee Orr
Executive Director
Louisiana Environmental Action Network/
Lower Mississippi Riverkeeper
P.O. Box 66323
Baton Rouge, LA 70896

References

The Advocate, “Nucor hit with EPA air pollution violations at St. James plant as DEQ mulls big permit increases,” 11/21/22,

https://www.theadvocate.com/baton_rouge/news/environment/seeking-air-permit-increases-nucor-hit-with-epa-violations/article_e26d2fa2-60ed-11ed-9ff5-b78a80a54989.html

Louisiana 2021 Greenhouse Gas Inventory, https://www.lsu.edu/ces/publications/2021/louisiana-2021-greehouse-gas-inventory-df-rev_reduced.pdf

Louisiana Hypoxia Working Group
Room 1197 Energy, Coast, & Environment Building
Louisiana State University
Baton Rouge, LA 70803

December 31, 2022

To: Louisiana Climate Initiatives Task Force

The following comments on the Draft 2022 Louisiana Climate Initiatives Task Force Annual Report are submitted on behalf of the Louisiana Hypoxia Working Group (LHWG), a monthly forum for the exchange of information and ideas related to implementation of the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan in this state.

The section of the Draft Report with the most direct interest for the focus of the LHWG is that for Natural and Working Lands and Wetlands (NWLW). As we noted in previous comments, there are collateral benefits from many of the practices and strategies in this area for both carbon sequestration and water quality improvement through nutrient processing, in addition to benefits for agricultural productivity and sustainability, flood control, and wildlife habitat.

A central component and consideration for current opportunities for progress in these areas is the availability of new federal funding resources from the passage of recent legislation such as the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Inflation, Investment, and Jobs Act (IIJA), and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). The NWLW section highlights new funding in the IIJA for the 12 Gulf Hypoxia Task Force States, including Louisiana, who have committed to implementing the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan (GHAP). In Louisiana, the bulk of the IIJA funding has apparently been directed to conservation projects in watersheds in the northeast part of the state, which is the most beneficial option for supporting the GHAP.

Both the GHAP and the Louisiana Climate Initiative have major milestones set for the year 2025. The GHAP set an Interim Target as part of its Revised Goal in 2014, i.e., to achieve by the year 2025 a 20% reduction in nitrogen (N) and phosphorus (P) loading to the Gulf of Mexico from the Mississippi-Atchafalaya River Basin (MARB). The 2025 Target is a key step for achieving the Coastal or Final Action Plan Goal of reaching an average annual size of 5000 square kilometers (1950 square miles) of the Gulf Hypoxic Zone by 2035.

The Executive Order (JBE2020-18) that established the Louisiana Climate Initiatives Task Force set a goal of reducing the State's net greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 26-28% of 2005 levels by 2025, as a key step for reaching the subsequent goals of net GHG reduction of 40-50% by 2030, and a GHG emission level of net zero by 2050.

The GHAP goal represents the cumulative efforts of all parties (public and private) undertaking nutrient reduction activities in the MARB, while the LCITF goals are focused strictly on in-state actions. Both, however, represent commitments made to the citizens and stakeholders of

Louisiana Hypoxia Working Group – Comments on Draft 2022 Report – 2

Louisiana, even if more formally in the case of the GHAP as part of a signed agreement with 11 upriver states, federal partner agencies, and Land Grant Universities in the MARB (representing the second revision of the first GHAP signed by states and federal agencies in 2000.)

An important step for assessing progress on both commitments is to compile a summary of activities (programs, projects, initiatives, etc.) underway that are helping to achieve the collateral goals of carbon sequestration in soil and vegetation; nutrient loss reduction, processing, and uptake, and improved water quality. This should include the full suite of conservation programs being coordinated by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, working with the State Office of Soil and Water Conservation and other partners. Indicators for activities supporting these goals include conservation and management practices, ecosystem protection and restoration, and pollution reduction, focused on the basins and watersheds where these are being undertaken.

Additional areas of opportunity have arisen in the ecosystem restoration sphere for making progress on timelines consistent with the GHAP and LCI Plan:

1) the increased level of funding available under the Land and Water Conservation Fund following its permanent reauthorization (2015) and approval by Congress of dedicated funding under the Great American Outdoors Act (2020), which can be coordinated with the Louisiana Outdoors Forever Program, as well as the America the Beautiful initiative undertaken by the Biden administration.

2) the Lower Mississippi River Restoration Study approved in the 2018 Water Resources Development authorized ecosystem restoration along six reach of the river between Cape Girardeau, MO and Baton Rouge, LA, including a section in Louisiana. The initial restoration effort in Tennessee has received funding, but downstream reaches, including the one in Louisiana, still need resources. This effort would be carried out in partnership with the Lower Mississippi River Conservation Committee (LMRCC) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

3) including private sector projects, many undertaken in partnership with federal and state agencies, such as those carried out by the Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited, Conservation Foundation, and Save the Earth Foundation.

As noted above, a core consideration for both plans and their goals remains the time frame of actions underway and anticipated.

Sincerely,

Doug Daigle

Coordinator, Louisiana Hypoxia Working Group

<https://www.facebook.com/Louisiana-Hypoxia-Working-Group-114808855347180/>



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December 30, 2022

Chairman Harry Vorhoff
c/o Lindsay Cooper, CITF Project Manager
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Comments on the Climate Initiatives Task Force Draft 2022 Climate Report

Dear Chairman Vorhoff and members of the Climate Initiatives Task Force;

At Pontchartrain Conservancy (PC), we envision a Louisiana coast that is environmentally sustainable, prosperous, and resilient. Our mission is to drive environmental sustainability and stewardship through scientific research, education, and advocacy. For over 30 years, our organization has addressed both natural and anthropogenic issues related to the health of the Pontchartrain basin ecosystem. Our body of work in coastal Louisiana includes projects and programs that span the Pontchartrain Basin coastal ecosystem including water quality monitoring, swamp restoration, construction of oyster brood stock reefs, and marine debris clean up including derelict crab traps. It is through the lens of science and advocacy that we offer these comments on the state's Draft 2022 Climate Report.

We appreciate the breakdown of new Federal funding opportunities in the plan and some of the uses for those funds described and explained. Federal funding through these very large packages can be difficult to track and to see the opportunities for the Climate Action Plan presented in this clear way lends to better stakeholder understanding of the potential for success.

We wholeheartedly approve of all efforts underway to clean up orphaned wells, including the Legislative actions taken during 2022 and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding dedicated to the effort. While the report lists these efforts under "Reduction of Methane Emissions," we recognize that the benefits are much more far reaching for the state in resolving a long-standing problem on the landscape. We support the push to find as much funding as possible to tackle this historic problem.

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We support continued evaluation of technologies and monitoring plans to improve the understanding of carbon capture and storage. There are a range of opportunities to sequester carbon and a variety of opinions as to the best ways to avoid the worst climate change scenarios. We encourage the state to continue to explore the options, conduct modeling, and educate stakeholders on available technologies and associated management and monitoring schemes that may achieve the state's stated goals. However, we would encourage that these projects, and all future industrial activities designed to protect our environment, are executed in locations where industrial activity exists already. Our fragile coastal ecosystem and pristine natural areas such as WMAs, National Wildlife Refuges and conservation areas should be recognized for their intrinsic values as new technologies emerge on Louisiana's landscape.

The establishment of the conservation of Louisiana Outdoors Forever Program and Fund during the 2022 regular session is welcome news for conservation of Louisiana's natural lands. With the Land and Water Conservation program and other similar pots of money available, the opportunity to leverage state money to bring in millions more in federal dollars is one that should be taken advantage of by the state.

We are especially pleased to see the IJA funding for nutrient reduction in the Hypoxia Action Plan. We are interested in understanding the measurable improvements over the five years at the \$1 million per year. PC has monitored the development of hypoxia in Chandeleur and Breton Sounds since 2008. With a grant from CPRA, we will install continuously operating stations in two locations to monitor hypoxia from March 2023 through May 2024. Gaining a full understanding of hypoxia dynamics will provide critical baseline data, which will allow targeted nutrient reduction to reduce future hypoxic events. Louisiana should take advantage of the 5-year monitoring period to measure and report on successes, seek additional funding and establish cooperative agreements with upriver states. We cannot understate the need to continue to address the larger issue from agricultural inputs, which will require interstate coordination.

As a member organization with the Mississippi River Delta Coalition, PC is a long-time supporter of the Louisiana Coastal Master Plan and have been tracking its progress for some months. We look forward to commenting directly on that plan when it is released.

We appreciate the first year in review and the opportunity to comment on these successes. In the coming years, we hope to see better coordinated land-use planning to reduce suburban sprawl, including development of a statewide framework for land-use practices that encourage compact development through local trainings, incentives, tools, best practices and guidelines from industry experts. This is key to the future of community resilience as we move into an era of more frequent and intense storms, utility outages, and flooding events.

Thank you for your continued support of critical environmental and climate issues that affect Louisiana's residents and ecosystems.

Sincerely,



Kristi Trail, Executive Director

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