



## **Terrebonne Biodiversity and Resiliency Projects – FAQ's**

### **How many wetland restoration projects are there?**

There are two distinct wetland restoration projects:

- Bayou Terrebonne near Montegut, Louisiana
- Pointe Aux Chenes Wildlife Management Area (WMA)

### **Who is supporting these wetland restoration projects?**

- BHP is the financial sponsor of both projects.
- The America's WETLAND Foundation (AWF) is overseeing and managing both projects and leading on public outreach and education regarding the benefits of restoration efforts. To learn more about AWF, visit [www.americaswetland.com](http://www.americaswetland.com).
- Resource Environmental Solutions, LLC (RES) is responsible for designing, implementing, and monitoring throughout the life of the two projects. To learn more about RES, visit [www.res.us](http://www.res.us).

This private sector partnership will initiate a long-anticipated program of AWF to establish a private registry of projects by type, cost, acreage, and carbon sequestered. The inventory is voluntary and is expected to provide an incentive for greater participation by the private sector in project sponsorship.

### **Where are the two projects located?**

Both projects are located within the Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary, one of the largest and most productive estuarine systems in the United States. Louisiana accounts for 90% of the nation's annual coastal wetland loss; land loss occurs as marginal erosion and interior marsh deterioration.

### **Why were these sites selected for restoration?**

The Bayou Terrebonne property is reverting from marsh to open water that allows for the progression of larger, wind-generated waves to form and accelerate erosion of the exposed shoreline. The marsh terrace project is needed to re-establish the structural integrity and resiliency of the land and the marsh habitat for a variety of living resources: shellfish, finfish, waterfowl, wading birds, small mammals, amphibians, and reptiles.

At the Pointe Aux Chenes (PAC) site, RES will reforest a 40.5-hectare Cypress-Tupelo swamp to create a species diverse, self-sustainable ecosystem. The functional benefit of the PAC project will include an increase in the quantity and quality of forested wetland habitat for resident and migratory wildlife and provide a buffer during storm events to the surrounding local communities, protecting human life and property.

Upon completion, both projects will result in more secure communities through natural protection in the event of hurricanes, storm surges and rising tides, enhanced biodiversity, volunteer opportunities, and resiliency education for changing environmental conditions.

### **How long will it take to complete the projects?**

Projects will be implemented over the next two years. After completion, there will be five years of maintenance and monitoring to help ensure the projects, including plantings, will stabilize and establish. Implementation plans for the project include coordinated multi-phase activities led by RES and delivered in concert with AWF. Each project has its own site-specific implementation activities interlaced with communications and outreach activities. Monitoring and recordation of biodiversity metrics following implementation will document the ecological richness that returns to the sites.

### **How many trees/plants will be used for the restoration?**

35,000 Bald Cypress plantings, as well as 35,000 plugs of native marsh grasses will be planted during the restoration phase of both projects.

**What is different about these trees/plants and why are the plants better than usual?**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides the RES nursery with the hardiest strains of indigenous species of plants proven to establish in the local habitats. At the RES nursery, the marsh grasses are exposed to conditions similar to the salt and brackish marshes in which they will be planted through the use of a salt water well at the RES Nursery- producing more readily salt-water tolerant plant. A key objective is to maintain and monitor genetic integrity of vegetative-propagated materials through DNA profiles.

**Why does this have a good chance of success?**

Sites are well located for effective restoration. The new terrace construction has cypress plantings on top of the terraces to provide increased biodiversity and mimic the historical cypress ridges that once dominated the area, and helps protect the plants from destruction by animal species such as nutria. Further, the project teams have an extensive, proven track record implementing projects of this nature in Louisiana. RES has vast experience in coastal restoration, having constructed more than 350 mitigation sites, restored more than 58,000 wetland acres, enhanced more than 294 miles of streams, planted more than 14 million trees, and preserved more than 9,100 acres of habitat. RES is a 7-time Inc. 5000 honoree.

**Will the projects include volunteers?**

Yes. A goal is to educate those volunteers about the importance of ecological restoration and the direct and indirect benefits to the long-term survivability of local Louisiana communities. Plantings of both cypress trees and restorative grasses will enable volunteer participation, along with informational tours. Local community based organizations will participate in project delivery and execution.

**Are the projects consistent with the state's master plan?**

Yes. They are critical to the overall success of the state's coastal master plan and are supported by citizens in their wetland-contiguous communities. They exemplify the potential for meaningful private sector involvement in restoration, noting the difficult challenge of raising public dollars alone to meet the restoration needs.

**Will public dollars be spent for the project?**

No, these are privately funded projects by BHP.