



LOUISIANA COASTAL FACTS

Historical Land Loss in Coastal Louisiana – Coastal Louisiana has experienced a net decrease of 1,883 square miles of land between 1932 and 2010 (Couvillion et al. 2011). Over just a four year period between 2004-2008, hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav, and Ike transformed approximately 328 square miles of marsh to open water – an amount that exceeded total land loss for the approximately 25 year period between 1978-2004 (Barras et al. 2008, Barras et al. 2009). Currently, Louisiana has 37% of the estuarine herbaceous marshes in the conterminous United States and accounts for 90% of coastal wetland loss in the lower 48 states.

Annual Rates of Coastal Land Loss

Land loss rates on the Louisiana coast have slowed from an average of more than 30 square miles per year between 1956 and 1978, to an estimated 16.57 square miles per year from 1985 to 2010. If this loss were to occur at a constant rate, it would equate to losing an area the size of a football field per hour (Couvillion et al. 2011).

Population Living in the Coastal Parishes - In 2009, over 2 million residents – approximately 47% of the state's population according to U.S. Census estimates - lived in Louisiana's coastal parishes (U.S. Census Bureau 2009). The coastal Louisiana area covers approximately 14,587 square miles, of which approximately 5,663 square miles is land (Couvillion et al. 2011).

Louisiana Energy Facts – According to 2009 energy estimates of Louisiana's Primary Energy Production: including Outer Continental Shelf production, Louisiana ranks 1st in crude oil and 1st in natural gas production; excluding Outer Continental Shelf production, Louisiana ranks 4th in natural gas and 5th in crude oil production among the 50 states (LDNR 2010).

Waterborne Commerce - Louisiana's coastal wetlands provide storm protection for ports that, according to 2005 data, carried 457 million tons of waterborne commerce, accounting for 18% of all waterborne commerce in the United States. Five of the top fifteen largest ports in the United States are located in Louisiana (USACE 2007).

Commercial Fishing – According to 2008 data, Louisiana commercial landings exceeded 916 million pounds with a dockside value of \$272.9 million, accounting for approximately 24% of the total catch by weight in the lower 48 States (USDOC 2009).

Recreational Fishing – According to 2009 data, Non-commercial fishing in Louisiana employs almost 20,000 people and related annual expenditures that amount to over \$1.7 billion (NOAA 2011).

Hunting – Hunting-related expenditures in Louisiana amounted to \$975 million (LDWF 2006).

Wildlife-watching – Expenditures related to wildlife-watching in Louisiana amounted to \$517 million (LDWF 2006).

Fur Harvest – According to 2007-2008 data, fur harvest in Louisiana's coastal wetlands generated approximately \$1.75 million (LDWF 2008).

Alligator Harvest – Louisiana's alligator harvest was valued at approximately \$109.2 million (LDWF 2006).

Waterfowl – Louisiana's coastal wetlands provide habitat for approximately 3.28 million migratory waterfowl (LDWF 2011).

Coastal Protection and Restoration Projects

- 184 projects have been constructed – 208 projects are in progress
- State-funded projects - 50 projects constructed
- CWPPRA projects - 95 projects constructed
- Other federally assisted projects - 39 projects constructed

CWPPRA - Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act; State - Restoration projects funded primarily by the State of Louisiana; Other federally assisted projects include: SECTION 204/1135 - Water Resource Development Act Sections 204 and 1135 beneficial use of dredged material projects, WRDA - Water Resources Development Act, LCA - Louisiana Coastal Area, FEMA - Federal Emergency Management Agency funded projects, CIAP - Coastal Impact Assistance Program; (Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority 2011).

Note: Although this document is updated regularly, please contact the OCPR for the most current statistics. Last updated 07/27/2011.

References

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For further information on Coastal Protection and Restoration Projects in Louisiana, please visit the CWPPRA home page (www.lacoast.gov), the OCPRA home page (www.coastal.la.gov), the Coast 2050 home page (www.coast2050.gov), the LCA home page (www.lca.gov), or the following government agencies:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Planning Division
(504) 865-1121
www.cecer.army.mil

U.S. Department of Interior
U.S. Geological Survey
National Wetlands Research Center
(337) 266-8556
www.nwrc.usgs.gov

Louisiana Department of Natural Resources
Office of the Secretary
Technology Assessment Division
(225) 342-1399
www.dnr.louisiana.gov/sec/execdiv/techasmt/

U.S. Department of Interior
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
(337) 291-3100
www.fws.gov

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
(318) 437-7756
www.la.nrcs.usda.gov

State of Louisiana
Governor's Office of Coastal Activities
(225) 342-3968
www.goca.state.la.us

U.S. Department of Commerce
National Marine Fisheries Service
(225) 389-0508
www.nmfs.gov

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 6
(225) 389-0735
www.epa.gov

State of Louisiana
Coastal Protection and Restoration
(225) 342-7308 or 1-888-459-6107
www.coastal.la.gov