Louisiana Nonpoint Source Pollution Program

Annual Report

Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2025

DEQ
LOUISIANA

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nonpoint source (NPS) pollution is an identified pollutant where the origin of contamination is unknown following rainfall or snowmelt events. Examples could include pet waste in a dog park; when the waste is washed away and into a nearby body of water, the waste, once identified, would be known as fecal coliform (FC) bacteria, however the origin for the waste would be unknown. Common types of NPS pollution include oil, fertilizers, bacteria, sediment, and pesticides.

Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 319 provides funding for states to develop and implement a NPS Program. Louisiana Revised Statute 30:2011, signed by the Governor in 1987 as Act 272, instructed Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ), designated as the Lead Agency for the state's Nonpoint Source Program, to develop and implement a NPS Management Program.

LDEQ administers Louisiana's NPS Program and collaborates with the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) and other agencies and organizations to implement the statewide program to improve water quality across the state. The Program also focuses at the watershed scale to address agriculture-induced impairments identified in LDEQ ambient water monitoring program. In concert with LDAF, the United States Department of Agriculture – National Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS), local Soil & Water Conservation Districts, and other stakeholders, LDEQ prioritizes watersheds for appropriate water quality projects tailored to watershed size, pollutants to be addressed, project funding, participating partners, and goals. Activities may be statewide, in the coastal zone, or on a watershed scale.

Roadmaps to address each of these elements at the watershed scale are built into Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs). WIPs are used to characterize watersheds, outline watershed-based project areas, and include strategies to minimize the impact of NPS pollution. WIPS also include objectives for attaining project goals and sustaining load reductions over time and across land use transitions.

Activities undertaken through these partnerships include prioritization of watershed planning and implementation, evaluating progress, and reporting program activities. This interagency coordination is the strength of Louisiana's NPS Program, resulting in water quality restoration and improvement, as well as success stories for the state. Louisiana's federal fiscal year (FFY) 2025 NPS Annual Report has been prepared in compliance with Section 319 of the CWA. This report outlines progress made in reducing NPS pollution and improving water quality within Louisiana.

Statewide, bacteria is a significant cause of impairment of both primary and secondary contact recreation uses in Louisiana waters. On-site disposal system (OSDS) maintenance issues continue to be a concern in Louisiana; therefore, LDEQ-NPS continues to place emphasis on water quality problems associated with OSDS. Several partners remain actively involved in inspecting systems and educating homeowners on the importance of protecting Louisiana's waterways by properly maintaining sewage systems. Partners engaged in this effort include Capital Resource Conservation & Development Council (RC&D), Louisiana Rural Water Association (LRWA), Bayou Vermilion District (BVD), and Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BTNEP).

In 2025, the NPS Program and its partners participated in watershed restoration activities and education and outreach across the state. These activities led to substantial progress in reducing NPS pollution, improving water quality, and therefore will continue to be implemented in watersheds in need of restoration. 2025 NPS Program highlights are as follows:

- LDEQ participated in 9 outreach and educational events;
- LDAF participated in over 20 outreach and educational events;
- Partner organizations participated in numerous additional outreach events;

- LDAF provided technical and financial assistance to 72 cooperators, in a total of ten priority watersheds, including Bayou Chene, Bayou Mallet, Bayou des Cannes, Bayou du Portage, Bayou Maringouin, Bayou Grosse Tete;
- LDAF provided technical assistance in the Vermilion River, Bayou Queue de Tortue and Big Creek Watersheds;
- LDEQ and LDAF managed approximately $2,733,770.56 million of Section 319 grant funds in order to implement projects to reduce NPS pollution and improve water quality;
- LDEQ submitted one WIP that has been accepted by EPA, and submitted another WIP to EPA for comment (Bayou Courtableau);
- LDEQ continued watershed planning and implementation activities with one watershed coordinator (WSC) and three watershed groups that are located in various parts of the state;
- LDEQ, LDAF, and (USDA-NRCS) continue partnering in watersheds prioritized through the National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI);
- LDEQ's NPS and Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) staff worked together on the New Vision Initiative;
- LDEQ Water Surveys (WS) staff provided water quality sampling for the NPS program in 16 watersheds; several partners provided water quality sampling for the NPS program in four watersheds;
- Louisiana continues to focus on watershed planning, assessment, monitoring and implementation in 22 watersheds;
- LDEQ's Drinking Water Protection Program (DWPP) implemented activities in the Lake Pontchartrain Basin and the Vermilion-Teche Basin;
- LDEQ published monitoring data in EQuIS and through the EPA Water Quality Exchange for active watersheds;
- LDEQ developed maps and spatial data analysis for active watersheds to assist in watershed planning, implementation, and monitoring.

LDEQ's DWPP staff engaged in source water protection (SWP) activities in various parishes, which included educating local businesses identified as potential sources of contamination to drinking water sources, conducting public community meetings and school presentations, developing eight contingency plans with water systems, as well as updating source water assessment data.

LDEQ, LDAF, the USDA-NRCS, and other partners continue to work together to improve the process of restoring and protecting watersheds. The success of LDEQ's NPS program is attributed to proficient collaboration of federal, state, and local governments, collaborating with universities, non-profit organizations, and the public. These alliances will continue to be the basis for watershed and statewide efforts during 2026.

2.0 SECTION 319 FUNDING

2.1 LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NONPOINT POLLUTION CONTROL PROGRAM

Louisiana's NPS program receives funding through CWA Section 319, prioritized to fund projects in coordination with USDA's Farm Bill, to implement its water quality goals and objectives. LDEQ continued collaborating with partners to conduct education/outreach, water quality monitoring, inspect OSDS systems, and to assist in developing WIPs to be implemented by LDAF and USDA-NRCS in NPS priority watersheds.

LDEQ utilized approximately $2.1 million in CWA Section 319 funds and matching contributions to support the NPS and Source Water Protection Program (SWPP), watershed coordination through education and outreach activities, NPS monitoring, watershed planning, and LDAF activities, to protect and/or restore recreational waters and drinking water supplies. Table 1 illustrates LDEQ Section 319 grant expenditures.

Table 1. LDEQ Section 319 Grant Expenditures

Grant Year	LDEQ (Federal)	Match
FFY22	$409,600.00	$273,067.00
FFY23	$411,870.00	$274,580.00
FFY24	$443,946.00	$295,964.00
TOTAL	**$1,265,416.00**	**$843,611.00**

2.2 LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

To provide technical assistance and best management practices (BMPs) through cost-share and incentive payments, LDAF expended approximately $1,468,354.56 in FY 2025 on watershed implementation within multiple watersheds around the state. Implementation, planning and/or technical assistance was conducted on approximately 59,284.7 acres of private farmland to restore or partially restore surface water quality in seven priority watersheds within the Ouachita River, Mermentau River, Terrebonne, and Vermilion-Teche Basins. Table 2 illustrates LDAF Section 319 grant expenditures.

Table 2. LDAF Section 319 Grant Expenditures

Grant Year	LDAF (Federal)
FFY2020	$506,132.56
FFY2021	$881,941.00
FFY2022	$80,281.00
FFY2023	$0
FFY2024	$0
TOTAL	$1,468,354.56

3.0 WATER QUALITY MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 LDEQ NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION PROGRAM

In FFY 2025, water quality monitoring continued in 22 watersheds (Table 3). The data collected assists LDEQ and its partners in making valuable decisions. Pre-BMP monitoring assists in identifying critical areas contributing to NPS pollutant loads. This aids in the selection of the appropriate types of BMPs needed in the most suitable locations. Post-BMP monitoring assists LDEQ and partners in determining if water quality is improving.

Table 3. Watersheds in which water quality monitoring was conducted in FFY2025

Watershed	Subsegment	Basin
Comite River	040103	Lake Pontchartrain
Middle Amite River	040302	
New River	040404	
Natalbany River	040503	
Yellow Water River	040504	
Bayou des Cannes	050101	Mermentau River
Bayou Mallet	050103	
Bayou Queue de Tortue	050501	
Bayou Chene	050603	
Bayou Courtableau	060204	Vermilion-Teche River
Bayou Teche	060301 060401 060501	
Bayou du Portage	060703	
Vermilion River	060801	
Thompson Creek *(completed January 2025)*	070502	Mississippi River
Bayou Bartholomew	080401	Ouachita
Big Creek (North)	080903	
Lake St. Joseph	081202	
Hemphill Creek	081609	
Bayou Cocodrie	101601	Red River Basin
Bayou Grosse Tete	120104	Terrebonne
Bayou Maringouin	120111	
Bayou Folse	120305	

LDEQ's NPS staff developed WIPs indicated in Table 4. WIPs developed for other priority watersheds are updated as necessary, as water quality data becomes available, and projects identified in the plan are implemented. In FFY 2025, LDEQ-NPS completed WIPs and submitted to EPA R6 for review. Watersheds are indicated in Table 4.

Table 4. Draft WIPs submitted in FFY2025

Watershed	Subsegment	Basin
Bayou Bartholomew (accepted)	080401	Ouachita
Bayou Courtableau (submitted)	060204	Vermilion Teche

Watershed planning for the watersheds indicated in Table 5 began in FFY 2025 and will still be in progress during FFY 2026.

Table 5. Watershed planning in progress FFY 2026

Watershed	Subsegment	Basin
Bayou Courtableau (addressing EPA's comments)	060204	Vermilion Teche
Bayou Cocodrie (initiating)	101601	Red River Basin
Bayou Teche (in development)	060301, 060401, 060501	Vermilion Teche

3.2 LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

LDAF provided technical assistance and BMP implementation on 59,284.7 acres in seven watersheds, see Table 6.

Table 6. Technical Assistance and BMP implementation

Watershed	Acres Implemented / Technical Assistance	Basin
Bayou Chene	10,192.29	Mermentau
Bayou Des Cannes	9,044.3	Mermentau River
Bayou Mallet	39,37.2	Mermentau River
Vermilion River	0	Vermilion Teche
Bayou Maringouin / Grosse Tete	13,991.55	Terrebonne
Bayou Du Portage	22,119.36	Terrebone
Bayou Queue de Tortue*	0	Mermentau River
Bayou Courtableau*	0	Vermilion Teche
Bayou Bartholomew*	0	Ouachita
TOTAL	59,284.7	

***Projects were in Pre-implementation phases**

These BMPs were carried out through the traditional conservation partnership cooperation between the USDA-NRCS, the LDAF, and participating Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs). These local SWCDs included Acadia, St. Martin, Lafayette, Northeast, St. Landry, LaSalle, Iberia, Evangeline, Jefferson Davis, Upper Delta, and Lower Delta. Signed contracts establish the participant's BMP payment schedules and implementation requirements, defining the relationship between themselves and the federal-state-local conservation delivery team. To attain water quality objectives, an array of proven conservation practices such as grade stabilization, conservation, prescribed grazing, heavy use area protection, critical area planting, irrigation land leveling, tillage and residue management, and others, were cost-shared through this program. Participants are required to implement a conservation plan through which additional BMPs are prescribed. These additional BMPs further ensure reduction of water quality impairments and exceed the participants required matching funds. To ensure effective delivery of these necessary BMPs, LDEQ provides water quality data, watershed modeling, planning, targeted sampling, mapping, and other critical logistical assistance to ensure maximum effectiveness for our collective efforts in restoring water quality in agricultural settings.

Table 7. **Activity and BMP implementation in Bayou Chene**

Bayou Chene	Subsegment 50603
Active conservation plans (CPs)	31
CPs created in **FFY 2025**	6
Applications received in **FFY 2025**	4
Acres in CPs	10,192.29
Total agricultural acres in watershed	91,839
Percentage of Ag Implementation Since WIP Acceptance**	4.4%

Best Management Practices	Units/Acres Completed in FFY 25
Irrigation land leveling (ac)	835.53
Residue and Tillage Management	588.81
Conservation and Crop Rotation	751.77
Irrigation Water Management	106.91
Nutrient Management/Precision Ag	566.68
Pest Management	491.19

****These number will increase each year as implementation occurs, this current baseline will be more accurately recorded in future reports**

Table 8. Activity and BMP implementation in Bayou des Cannes

Bayou des Cannes	Subsegment 050101
Active conservation plans (CPs)	13
CPs created in **FFY 2025**	0
Applications received in **FFY 2025**	0
Acres in CPs (total acres in CPs	9,044.3
Total agricultural acres in watershed	116,597
Percentage of Ag Implementation Since WIP Acceptance**	1%

Best Management Practices	Units/Acres Completed in FFY 25
Irrigation land leveling (ac)	120
Irrigation Water Management	47.9
Conservation Cover	47.9
Wildlife Habitat Management	209.8

Irrigation Pipeline (ft.)	9854
Grade Stabilization Structure (No.)	0
Conservation Crop Rotation	750.5

****These number will increase each year as implementation occurs, this current baseline will be more accurately recorded in future reports**

Table 9. Activity and BMP implementation in Bayou Maringouin/Grosse Tete

Bayou Maringouin/Grosse Tete	Subsegments 120104 & 120111
Active conservation plans (CPs)	3
CPs created in **FFY 2025**	1
Applications received in **FFY 2025**	2
Acres in CPs	13,991.55
Total agricultural acres in watershed	93,820
Percentage of Ag Implementation Since WIP Acceptance**	.79%

Best Management Practices	**Units/Acres Completed in FFY 25**
Cover Crops (ac)	361.6 (all in Bayou Maringouin)

****These number will increase each year as implementation occurs, this current baseline will be more accurately recorded in future reports**

Table 10. Activity and BMP implementation in Bayou du Portage

Bayou du Portage	Subsegment 060703
Active conservation plans (CPs)	7
CPs created in **FFY 2025**	5
Applications received in **FFY 2025**	5
Acres in CPs (total acres in CPs	22,119.36
Total agricultural acres in watershed	61,923
Percentage of Ag Implementation Since WIP Acceptance**	17.2%

Best Management Practices	**Units/Acres Completed in FFY 25**

Irrigation land leveling (ac)	45.59
Grade stabilization structure (No.)	83.24
Irrigation pipeline	0
Nutrient Management	2875.38
Cover crops	366.97
Residue Management – Reduced Till	452.6

****These number will increase each year as implementation occurs, this current baseline will be more accurately recorded in future reports**

Table 11. Activity and BMP implementation in Vermilion River

Vermilion River		Subsegment 060801
Active conservation plans (CPs)		0
CPs created in **FFY 2025**		0
Applications received in **FFY 2025**		0
Acres in CPs (total acres in CPs		0
Total agricultural acres in watershed		103,438
Percentage of Ag Implementation Since WIP Acceptance (No Implementation as of this reporting Period)		0.002%
Best Management Practices	**Units/Acres Obligated**	**Units/Acres Completed in FFY 25**

****These number will increase each year as implementation occurs, this current baseline will be more accurately recorded in future reports**

Table 12. Activity and BMP implementation in Bayou Mallet

Bayou Mallet	Subsegment 050103
Active conservation plans (CPs)	7
CPs created in **FFY 2025**	5
Applications received in **FFY 2025**	4
Acres in CPs (total acres in CPs	3,937.2
Total agricultural acres in watershed	67,130
Percentage of Ag Implementation Since WIP Acceptance**	1.2%

Best Management Practices	Units/Acres Completed in FFY 25
Grade Stabilization Structure (No.)	16.19
Irrigation Land Leveling (ac)	523.01
Conservation Crop Rotation	92.08
Nutrient Management	92.08
Pest management	92.08
Irrigation Pipeline (ft.)	3180

****These number will increase each year as implementation occurs, this current baseline will be more accurately recorded in future reports**

Table 13. Activity and BMP implementation in Big Creek

Bayou Bartholomew	Subsegment 080903
Active conservation plans (CPs)	0
CPs created in **FFY 2025**	0
Applications received in **FFY 2025**	12
Acres in CPs (total acres in CPs	0
Total agricultural acres in watershed	70,328
Percentage of Ag Implementation Since WIP Acceptance (Implementation started after this reporting Period)	0%

Best Management Practices	Units/Acres Completed in FFY 25

***Project is in Pre-implementation phase**

****These number will increase each year as implementation occurs, this current baseline will be more accurately recorded in future reports**

Table 14. Activity and BMP implementation in Bayou Queue de Tortue

Bayou Queue de Tortue	Subsegment 050501
Active conservation plans (CPs)	0
CPs created in **FFY 2025**	0
Applications received in **FFY 2025**	16
Acres in CPs (total acres in CPs	0

Total agricultural acres in watershed	65,000
Percentage of Ag Implementation Since WIP Acceptance**	11%

Best Management Practices	Units/Acres Completed in FFY 25

***Project in Pre-implementation Phase**

****These number will increase each year as implementation occurs, this current baseline will be more accurately recorded in future reports**

4.0 COORDINATION WITH PARTNERS

4.1 LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

The LDAF Office of Soil and Water Conservation (OSWC) continues to work closely with a network of dedicated partners to ensure comprehensive planning, effective implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs), and impactful outreach for each 319 project.

- LDAF Communications Department – Responsible for engaging with the media and communicating with the public on behalf of LDAF. The Communications Department's outreach efforts help raise awareness of conservation initiatives and promote transparency in program activities.
- Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) – These local units of state government play a central role in implementing both state and local soil and water conservation programs. OSWC coordinates with all forty-four SWCDs across Louisiana, providing technical and financial assistance, administrative support, and centralized coordination to ensure efficient and locally informed conservation planning.
- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) – As a federal agency within the USDA, NRCS brings valuable technical expertise and resources to support conservation efforts. OSWC partners with NRCS to align state and federal conservation goals, enhance BMP implementation, and leverage shared knowledge to improve water quality outcomes.

These partnerships remain foundational to the success of the 319 program, enabling OSWC to deliver targeted solutions that address nonpoint source pollution while fostering community involvement and environmental stewardship.

4.2 LDEQ WATER SURVEYS

The LDEQ WS staff fundamentally serves the Department as an intrinsic element of sampling efforts. WS successfully monitored 16 NPS watersheds (refer to Table 15) setting the standard of success through a vision of restoring and preserving the health and safety of Louisiana waters. The data collected helps establish current water quality conditions in the watersheds, identifying geographic areas for targeting best management practices and OSDS inspection locations; and tracks changes in water quality over time from BMP implementation and OSDS inspections in the watersheds.

WS also collaborates with the LDEQ Water Permits Division; Standards and Assessment; and the Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) group under the long-term vision projects for assessment, restoration and

protection under the Clean Water Action Section 303 (d) Program. WS provides valuable regular feedback on any changes in the condition of each watershed and issues encountered, such as dumping sites, for project managers to address with partners.

Water Surveys' sampling information helps track water quality changes. LDEQ shares the sampling results with LDAF and other partners, and depending on those results may need to consult LDAF to consider alternative or additional BMPs, work with local SWCD and producers, work with Water Surveys and determine alternative / additional sites, and / or update applicable work plans / documents as needed.

LDEQ and LDAF meet regularly, and with other partners as needed. During this reporting period an initial partners meeting was held with multiple agencies represented. Additionally, LDEQ and LDAF confer via meetings / emails / calls:

- Quarterly Meetings to discuss LDEQ/LDAF activities,
- Discuss overall characterization of each priority watershed,
- Additional phone calls / meetings as needed,
- NPS Workshop provides discussion opportunities,
- LDEQ and LDAF attend SWCD meetings in active / planning watersheds

LDEQ shares maps and updated monitoring data at meetings or in presentations to show where high pollutant concentrations occur. This helps inform Districts, producers, and other stakeholders as to problem areas and encourages participation. This reporting period the Louisiana Hypoxia Working Group hosted four workshops on the Upper Barataria and Terrebonne Basin where LDEQ, LDAF, and NRCS presented on activities in watersheds in that region, including monitoring results.

NPS meetings / emails with Water Surveys:

- To assist NPS staff with water quality reconnaissance, baseline assessment, water quality sampling and flow measurements for calculating in-stream loading in priority watersheds,
- Meetings with local governments / police jury / SWCD where the watershed resides may be required for overview and resolution of issues,
- Monthly sampling runs,
- Private property permission and coordination with LDAF for sampling site access,
- Chain of Custody and Field Data Forms may denote site issues.

Remedial / corrective action taken as needed (e.g., dump site, etc.). Based on Water Surveys reports, LDEQ may contact SWCD or local government for cleanup. Water Surveys' reports of a dump site in Bayou Maringouin led to NPS staff contacting the local SWCD and local government, who responded by cleaning the site and attempting to address the dumping in the waterbody.

Table 15. Monitored NPS watersheds

Basin	Water Body	WS Monitoring Supports
Lake Pontchartrain Basin	Comite River (040103)	OSDS Inspections
	Natalbany River (040503)	OSDS Inspections (New Vision)
Mermentau River Basin	Bayou des Cannes (050101)	LDAF BMPs
	Bayou Mallet (050103)	LDAF BMPs
	Bayou Queue de Tortue (050501)	LDAF BMPs
	Bayou Chene (050603)	LDAF BMPs
Vermilion-Teche River Basin	Bayou Courtableau (060204)	LDAF BMPs TBD upon WIP-acceptance (Addressing EPA's comments)
	Bayou Teche (060301, 060401, 060501)	LDAF BMPs TBD upon WIP-acceptance (WIP in development)
	Bayou du Portage (060703)	LDAF BMPs
	Vermilion River (060801)	OSDS Inspections / LDAF BMPs
Ouachita River Basin	Bayou Bartholomew (080401)	LDAF BMPs **WIP EPA-accepted 02/05/25**
	Big Creek (North) (080903)	LDAF BMPs
	[1]Lake St. Joseph (081202)	LDAF BMPs * IIJA BIL Funding / WIP NA
	Hemphill Creek (081609)	LDAF BMPs
Red River Basin	Bayou Cocodrie (101601)	LDAF BMPs * Planning Stages Monitoring / WIP TBD
Terrebonne Basin	Bayou Grosse Tete (120104)	LDAF BMPs
	Bayou Maringouin (120111)	LDAF BMPs
[1]Lake St. Joseph (081202) monitoring will support the Louisiana Nutrient Reduction and Management Strategy and a nutrient loading reduction project funded through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Gulf Hypoxia Program (GHP) to conduct targeted agricultural BMPs implemented on prioritized tracts within the Lake St. Joseph and Cypress Bayou watersheds to reduce agriculture-induced nutrient loading in the Tensas River Basin.		
New Vision Activity		
Water Planning and Assessment Division / TMDLS	New River (040404) Monitoring	NPS OSDS Inspections 10/01/2023

WS brings a multifaceted qualitative approach to observing and characterizing the size and appearance of these waterbodies and their surroundings to gain perspective and understanding of the watersheds. This, along with the quantitative research through sampling data analysis, can assist in determining the causes and effects of an impaired watershed by tracking water quality changes through BMP implementation and OSDS inspections.

4.3 LDEQ WATER STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENT

The Water Quality Standards and Assessment Section conducts work to evaluate the overall quality of the water resources of the state, then develops/refines water quality standards as needed in support of the Clean Water Act. These standards protect the designated uses of the state waters and are the basis for water quality assessments, pollution allocations, and permit limits. Activities performed by the section during the fiscal year include:

- Performed quality control data evaluation procedures to review data collected under the *Quality Assurance Project Plan for the Ambient Water Quality Monitoring Network* (986 lab datasets and two (2) dissolved oxygen continuous monitors (DOCM) datasets) used for water quality standards, assessment, special projects, and/or modeling projects;
- Performed site review for 39 dissolved oxygen criterion failure notifications for the evaluation of deployment of DOCM;

- Completed the EPA 40 CFR 130.8(d) section 205(j)(2)(c) certification of the 2024 Integrated report and Initiated the development process for the 2026 Integrated Report;
- Completed the 2024 Nutrient Reduction Management Strategy Annual Report;
- Completed the final project report for the *Quality Assurance Project Plan for Development of Numeric Turbidity Criteria in Louisiana Waterbodies*;
- Completed a revision of the *Quality Assurance Project Plan for Trace Metals Monitoring for Assessment in Louisiana Surface Waters Using Clean Sampling and Analysis Techniques and completed review of data;*
- Developed the *Quality Assurance Project Plan for Monitoring Ecoregions to Support Water Quality Standards*;
- Ongoing review of data collected for the *Quality Assurance Project Plan for Monitoring for Escherichia coli and Enterococci to Support Water Quality Standards Review*;
- Ongoing review of toxics data collected for the *Quality Assurance Project Plan for Monitoring to Support Water Quality Standards Review*;
- Ongoing review of data collected for the *Quality Assurance Project Plan for Coastal Louisiana Dissolved Oxygen Study and Evaluation of Dissolved Oxygen Criteria in Stratified Waters;*
- Ongoing work under the *Quality Assurance Project Plan for Lake St. Joseph, Louisiana, Nutrient Loading Reduction* included monitoring progress, reviewing data, and annual reporting;
- Ongoing review of data collected under the *Quality Assurance Project Plan for mercury Contaminant Levels in Louisiana Biota, Sediments, and Surface Waters*; collaboration on LDH issued Fish Consumption and Swimming Advisories; and maintenance of the Fishing Consumption and Swimming Advisories web map and application for smartphones (www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/fishing-consumption-and-swimming-advisories);
- Certified LDEQ's first Water Quality Trading program pollutant reduction credits; continued to review applications and participate in meetings with various groups interested in the program (https://deq.louisiana.gov/page/water-quality-trading);
- Continued the latest cycle of triennial review;
- Continued maintenance and updates of the LEAU Web Portal to facilitate public access to water quality data (https://waterdata.deq.louisiana.gov);
- Continued reviewing 316(b) (cooling water intake structure studies and reports) plans for Water Permits Division;
- Continued analysis of data collected under the *Quality Assurance Project Plan for the Investigation of Biological Nutrient Thresholds in Louisiana Inland Lakes* in preparation of development of draft approach of translators of narrative nutrient criteria for assessment purposes;
- Continued analysis of data collected under the *Quality Assurance Project Plan for Monitoring to Support Biotic Ligand Model (BLM) Methodology and Selenium Freshwater Aquatic Life Criteria* to evaluate of the applicability of the BLM model;
- Continued work on clarifying methodology of aquatic life criteria calculations not explicitly expressed in 1985 Guidelines;
- Participated in LDEQ Monthly Water Program Workgroup meetings;
- Participated in LDEQ and EPA R6 conference calls on 303(d), TMDL, and water quality standards activities;
- Participated in Senate Natural Resources Committee Meetings;
- Participated in House Natural Resources and Environment Committee Meetings;
- Participated in the Seafood Safety Task Force meetings as LDEQ committee designee;
- Participated in the Louisiana Attorney General's Good Government Program;
- Participated in the National Nonpoint Source Workshop;
- Participated on the ACWA Watersheds Committee, Monitoring, Standards and Assessment Committee, Nutrients Policy Committee, and Executive Committee; and ACWA hosted EPA Briefing for States meetings; and the 2025 Water Quality Standards Workshop;
- Participated in EPA's development of TADA R Package workgroup;
- Participated in EPA's PFOA/PFOS Aquatic Life Criteria Implementation Workgroup;

- Participated in EPA's Exchange Network Forum meetings;
- Participated in monthly to quarterly calls for Gulf of America Alliance (GOAA) Water Resources and Data & Monitoring Teams, represented Team-Lead for Water Resources, which additionally includes monthly Alliance Coordination Team meetings, team internal meetings; attended the mid-year meeting and the All Hands Conference in Biloxi, MS;
- Participated in monthly Louisiana GIS Council Meetings;
- Participated in Lower Mississippi River Conservation Committee calls; and attended the 2025 annual meeting in Baton Rouge, LA;
- Participated in Mississippi River/Gulf of America Hypoxia Task Force Coordinating Committee meetings every other month; and attended annual meeting;
- Participated in Louisiana State Interagency Nutrient Strategy Team coordination efforts;
- Participated in the Louisiana Envirothon, attended monthly meetings, developed and graded student exams in line with national curriculum;
- Participated in the Louisiana Chapter of the American Fisheries Society annual meeting;
- Participated in the 2nd Louisiana Harmful Algal Blooms Task Force Meeting;
- Participated in the 2025 National Training Workshop on Water Quality Data, Assessment and Plans;
- Participated in the 12th U.S Symposium of Harmful Algae in Portland, ME;
- Participated in Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program Meetings;
- Presented at an LSU Environmental Management Systems Guest Lecture session; and
- Presented the Walnut Bayou river model at outreach events throughout the year.

4.4 LDEQ TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOAD SECTION: A STATE PLAN FOR PRIORITIZING WATERSHEDS FOR RESTORATION AND PROTECTION IN LOUISIANA

The CWA Section 303(d) Program provides effective integration for implementation of activities to restore and protect the nation's aquatic resources where the waters have been assessed. The primary goals of the "New Vision" approach to the TMDL program include prioritization, assessment, protection, alternatives, engagement, and integration. Restoration and protection objectives have been systematically prioritized, and TMDLs and alternative approaches were adaptively implemented to achieve water quality targets with the collaboration of states, federal agencies, tribes, stakeholders, and the public, from 2016-2022. The EPA worked together with states to develop the New Vision and six goal statements to help coordinate and focus efforts in advancing the effectiveness of the program. The vision and goals are neither regulation nor policy guidance but provide a mechanism for EPA and states to better manage the program to achieve water quality goals. EPA encouraged each state to embrace the vision concept and develop a strategy that outlines a comprehensive, integrated, and iterative approach to addressing the challenge of achieving and communicating water quality improvements.

In 2021 and 2022, EPA and the states worked together to update this "New Vision" approach for 2023-2032. While the wording may have changed slightly, all the concepts and functionalities of the original vision remain.

Initially, LDEQ identified seven priority watersheds under this New Vision approach in the 2016 Integrated Report. They were Tunica Bayou (070505), Bayou Sara (070501), Turkey Creek (080905), Yellow Water River (040504), Natalbany River (040503, 040507), Blind River (040401, 040403), and New River (040404). In an effort to optimize limited resources, LDEQ removed Subsegment 080905 Turkey Creek from the list of priority watersheds in 2017 due to the limited access to the waterbody and uncertainties regarding potential loading sources and causes.

EPA accepted the final restoration plan for the first priority watershed, Tunica Bayou, on October 5, 2020. LDEQ completed 19 months of monitoring in Yellow Water River by September 2019. Except for one site being monitored to guide restoration activities, monitoring for the Natalbany River was completed in March 2021. Outreach and engagement activities have continued for both watersheds. A draft New Vision plan for Yellow Water River is currently under development. Watershed investigations for Bayou Sara were conducted in 2017 and 2018 and a draft New Vision plan is currently under development. LDEQ began monitoring New River in July 2021 and Blind River in February 2022. Monitoring in both watersheds is ongoing and New Vision plans are expected.

Additionally, a revised TMDL report is being developed for biochemical oxygen-demanding substances in Subsegment 020101 Bayou Verret, Bayou Chevreuil, Bayou Citamon, and Grand Bayou.

LDEQ is promoting the use of stream corridor and watershed restoration activities, in particular process nature-based corridor design/natural channel design (PNBCD/NCD), as a form of TMDL alternative plan. LDEQ is pursuing a demonstration project to show that PNBCD/NCD can improve water quality.

There has been a long-term connection between the Section 319 NPS program and the CWA 303(d) programs. LDEQ remains committed to integrating across federal and state water programs, engaging the public and stakeholders, and adaptively developing, evaluating, and implementing TMDLs and TMDL alternatives to ensure strategic use of available resources to achieve water quality goals.

4.5 USDA-NRCS INITIATIVES

During FY 2025, LDEQ, LDAF and USDA-NRCS continued to coordinate efforts in watersheds prioritized through USDA's Mississippi River Basin Initiative (MRBI), NWQI, and Gulf Spill Restoration Nutrient Reduction Projects (see Tables 17-23). The map in Figure 1 shows the HUC12 Watersheds where this nutrient reduction was implemented, or funding was allocated, during FY 2025 with funding associated with USDA FPAC NRCS.

Through the funding acquired from the USDA Farm Bill and Section 319, USDA and LDAF work with landowners and producers to implement agricultural BMPs through cost share agreements. LDEQ utilizes Section 319 grant funds for several contracts to aid in monitoring and assistance from partners. LDEQ's WS performs watershed assessment and characterization, pre-BMP sampling to collect baseline data used to determine critical areas for BMP implementation, and post-BMP sampling to determine the changes in water quality. Monitoring data is shared with NRCS. The following is a summary of NRCS work in Louisiana in the 2025 fiscal year.

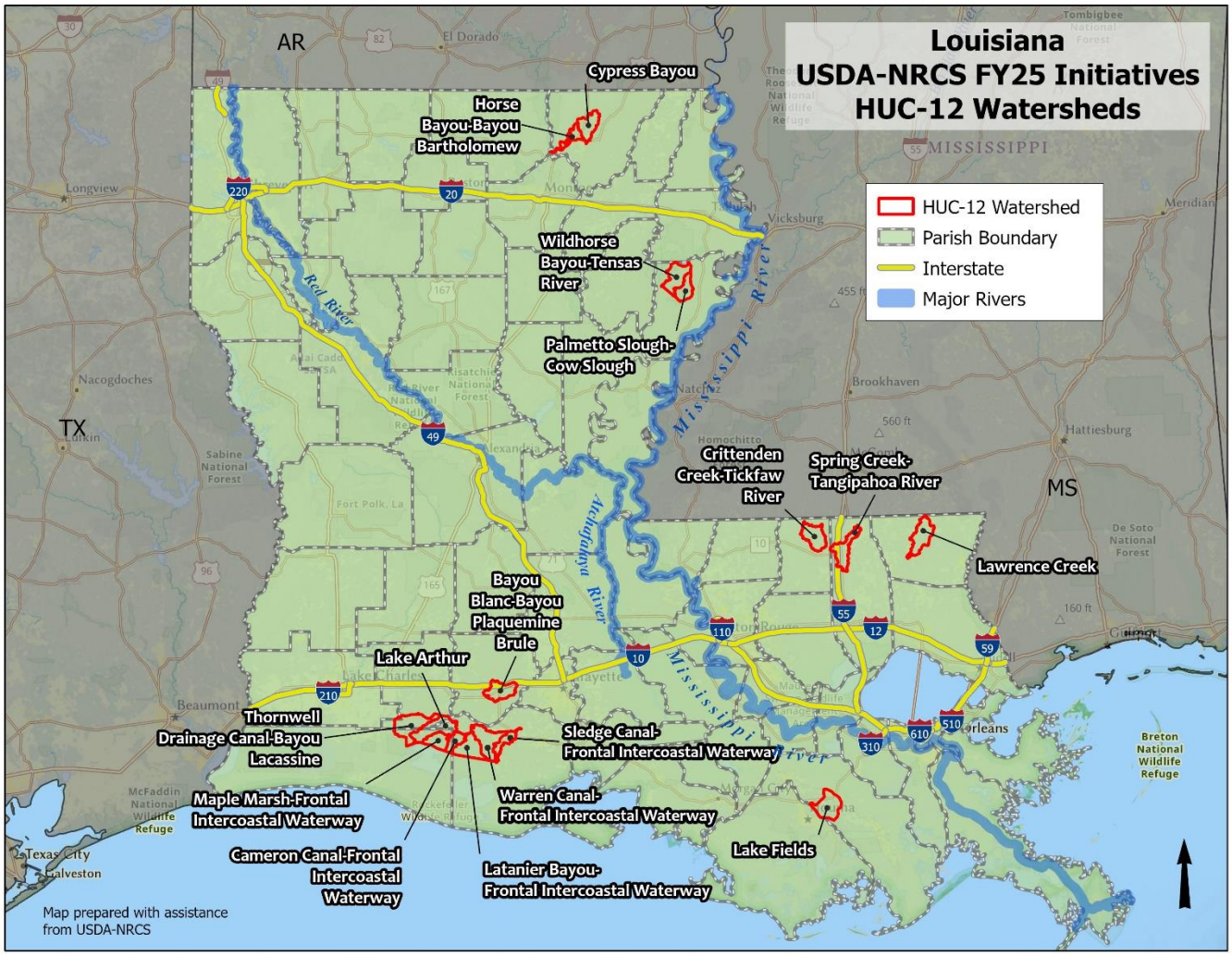

Figure 1. NRCS map showing HUC-12 watersheds where Louisiana USDA NRCS staff and partners conducted activities or allocated funding for initiatives with nutrient reduction management strategies in FY 2025

4.5.1 MISSISSIPPI RIVER BASIN INITIATIVE (MRBI)

The overall goals of the MRBI include reducing fall tillage and keeping the soil covered by increasing the use of cover crops and/or increasing residue to reduce soil loss. NRCS assists producers in improving nutrient management techniques above their current level to increase nutrient utilization. NRCS, SWCDs, and other partners develop targeted outreach plans to reach every producer within the watershed. Conservation planning and technical assistance are offered at no charge to help producers address the watershed goals and to improve water quality. In FY 2025, $760,135 were obligated on 2,473 acres for MRBI in Louisiana (Table 16). These watersheds will have a 5-year project life.

Table 16. USDA – FY2025 Mississippi River Basin Initiative watersheds in Tensas Parish

Watershed	12-Digit HUC	FY25 Funds Obligated	FY25 Acres Obligated
Wild Horse Bayou – Tensas River	080500030402	$450,000	2,004.6
Palmetto Slough – Cow Slough	080500030404	$310,135	742.7
Total		$760,135	2,747.3 Acres

4.5.2 NATIONAL WATER QUALITY INITIATIVE (NWQI)

The National Water Quality Initiative provides a way to accelerate voluntary, on-farm conservation investments and focused water quality monitoring and assessment resources where they can deliver the greatest benefits for clean water. NWQI has been extended through FY 2025, with some updates to strengthen program delivery. Updates include a focus on watershed assessment and planning and including multi-year budgets to demonstrate long-term commitment in assisting water quality efforts. Louisiana implemented the NWQI project in the watershed below for Acadia Parish (See Table 17).

Table 17. USDA – FY2025 NWQI watersheds approved for FY2025 implementation in Acadia Parish

Watershed	12-Digit HUC	FY24 Funds Obligated	FY24 Acres Obligated
Bayou Blanc - Bayou Plaquemine Brule	080802010206	$29,829	64.2
Total		$29,829	64.2 Acres

Funds for Louisiana were approved, and the Implementation Phase for FY25 began, for the following NWQI watersheds in Morehouse Parish (see Table 18).

Table 18. USDA – FY2025 NWQI watersheds approved for implementation Phase in Morehouse Parish

Watershed	12-Digit HUC	FY25 Funds Obligated	FY25 Acres Obligated
Cypress Bayou - Bayou Bartholomew	080402051002	$170,889	300.0
Cypress Bayou - Bayou Bartholomew	080402051002	$286,915	532.0
Horse Bayou - Bayou Bartholomew	080402051003	$147,999	260.0
Horse Bayou - Bayou Bartholomew	080402051003	$292,530	541.9
Total		$898,333	1,633.9 Acres

4.5.3 NATURAL RESOURCE DAMAGE ASSESSMENT TRUSTEES - NUTRIENT REDUCTION (NONPOINT SOURCE) PROJECTS

Louisiana NRCS was awarded four Nutrient Reduction Projects from the Gulf Spill Restoration funding. The primary goal of this project is to improve water quality through nutrient reduction on agricultural lands. This includes targeting efforts for measurable impact by clustering projects at the HUC 12 watershed scale that directly impact coastal wetlands.

Landowners will participate on a voluntary basis in developing and implementing conservation plans to reduce nutrient and sediment runoff to improve water quality. Participants will receive technical and financial assistance to implement conservation practices according to NRCS standards and specifications. Monitoring and adaptive management plans were implemented to document the relationship between implementation and load reduction.

USDA NRDA FY 2025 Project 1 – Nutrient Reduction on Dairy Farms in Washington, St. Helena and Tangipahoa Parishes.

The following contracts were implemented in FY25 in Washington, Tangipahoa and St. Helena Parishes on dairy farms to reduce nutrient exports in this hilly area north of the New Orleans metropolitan area and Lake Pontchartrain.

Table 19. USDA NRDA FY 2025 Project 1. Nutrient reduction implemented on dairy farms in Washington, Tangipahoa and St. Helena Parishes

Parish and Watershed	HUC 12	FY25 Funds Obligated ($)	FY25 Spreadable Acres Obligated
Washington Parish – Lawrence Creek	031800050602	$154,390	521.3
Tangipahoa Parish - Beaver Creek	080702050204	$ 57,098	107.8
St. Helena parish Crittenden Creek -Tickfaw River	080702030103	$3,090	28.6
Total		$214,578	657.7

USDA NRDA FY 2025 Project 2 – Nutrient Reduction on Cropland and Grazing Land near Bayou Folse. Covered area in FY25 included a total of 16 contracts obligated that resulted in nutrient reduction into Bayou Folse. This bayou drains past Port Fourchon just west of Grand Isle State Park, an area some 50 miles west of the entrance to the Mississippi River. This small river (bayou) is sometimes called Bayou Lafourche, since it drains through Lafourche Parish.

Table 20. USDA NRDA FY 2025 Project 2. – Nutrient reduction on cropland and grazing land near Bayou Folse in Lafourche Parish

Parish and Watershed	HUC12	FY25 Funds Obligated ($)	FY25 Acres Obligated
Lafourche Parish – Bayou Folse	080903020503	$778,755	2,155
Total		$ 778,755	2,155

USDA NRDA FY 2025 Project 3 – Nutrient Reduction in Vermilion and Cameron Parishes by Winter Water Holding on Cropland Plus Agricultural BMPs. Coverage in FY25 included a series of seven HUC12 Watersheds that are wetland areas flowing naturally from west of Lake Charles in the northwest to Grand Lake in the southeast. This is prime migratory waterfowl habitat in the vicinity of the Lacassine National Wildlife Refuge. These prime waterfowl breeding grounds are inland from the Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge. This refuge borders the Gulf of America with one of the world's highest concentrations of desirable game and protected migratory bird species of ducks, geese and wading birds. This work is being conducted by staff of Ducks Unlimited with partial funding from USDA NRCS (https://www.ducks.org/conservation/du-conservation-initiatives/gulf-coast-initiative).

New funds were allocated in FY25 for two (2) of the seven HUC12 watersheds in this contiguous land area: Latanier Bayou - Frontal Intercoastal Waterway and Warren Canal - Frontal Intercoastal Waterway. Both involved funds allocated for a total of 301.7 acres, (See Table 21). Work was ongoing in the other five HUC12 watersheds based on contracts previously allocated.

Figure 2 illustrates current activities drawn in red ink, primarily in areas where nesting and feeding habitats are found for migratory waterfowl. Additional HUC12 watersheds drawn in blue ink show where Ducks Unlimited would like to expand winter water holding projects for waterfowl habitat. Additional funds are being sought from the Gulf Spill Restoration and other funding sources to benefit this proposed expansion shown in blue ink. The proposed expansion into farming areas in Jefferson Davis, Acadia and Vermilion Parishes would provide extensive food resources for waterfowl scavenging after harvest from grain fields, especially rice and soybeans.

Table 21. USDA NRDA FY 2025 Project 3. Nutrient Reduction by winter water holding on cropland plus agricultural BMPs in Cameron, Jefferson Davis, and Vermilion Parishes

Watershed and Parish	HUC 12	FY25 Funds Allocated ($)	FY25 Acres Allocated
Thornwell Drainage Canal - Bayou Lacassine. Cameron & Jefferson Davis Parishes	080802020206		
Lake Arthur. Cameron, Jefferson Davis & Vermilion Parishes	80802020302		
Maple Marsh - Frontal Intercoastal Waterway. Cameron Parish	080802020601		
Cameron Canal - Frontal Intercoastal Waterway. Cameron & Vermilion Parishes	080802020602		
Latanier Bayou - Frontal Intercoastal Waterway. Vermilion Parish	080802020603	$ 105,747	198.4
Warren Canal - Frontal Intercoastal Waterway. Vermilion Parish	080802020604	$ 42,146	103.3
Sledge Canal - Frontal Intercoastal Waterway. Vermilion Parish	080802020501		
Total		$ 147,893	301.7

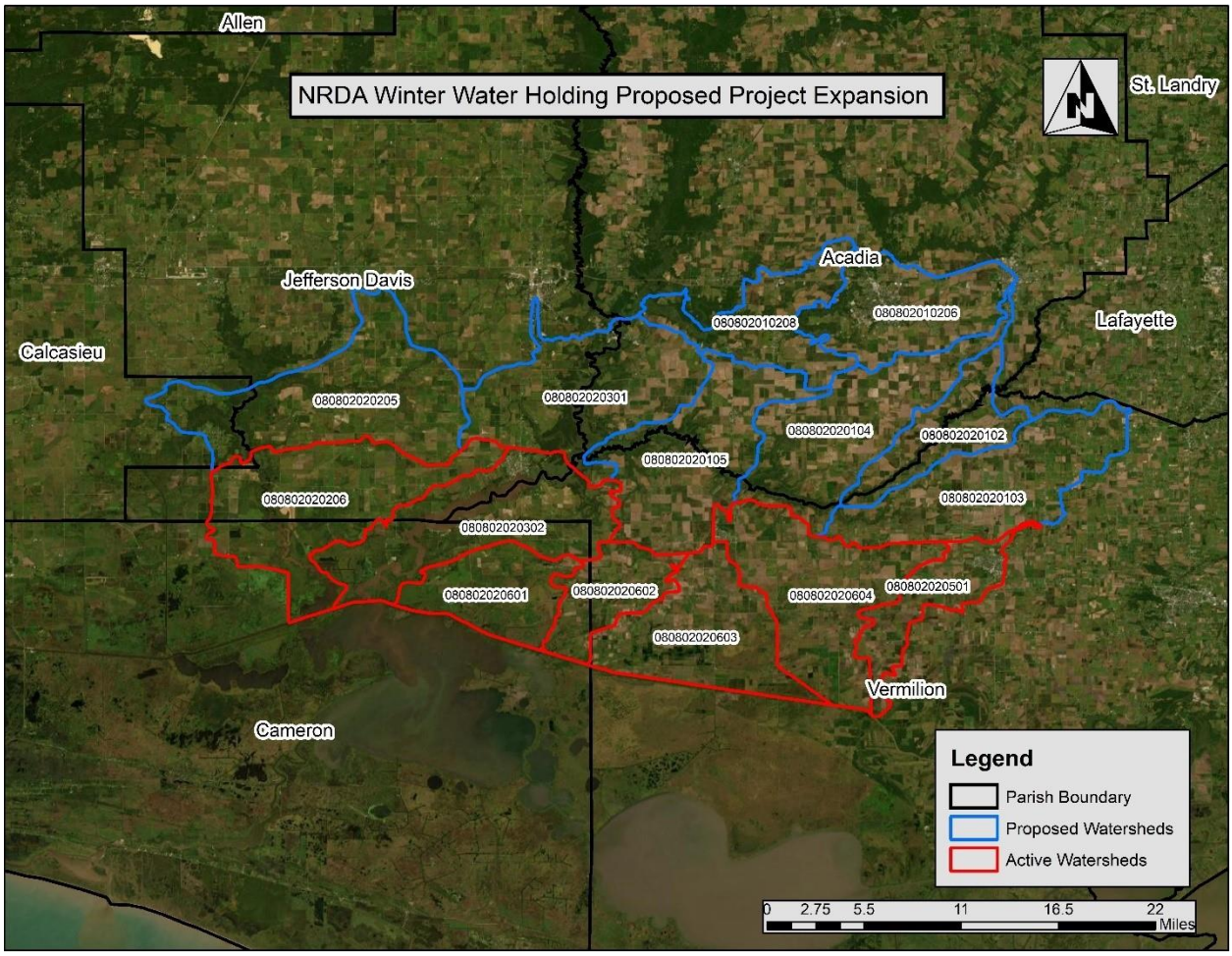

Figure 2. NRCS map showing 2025 present project area (in red) and proposed project expansion (in blue) for HUC12 watersheds where Ducks Unlimited has been / might be conducting NRDA winter water holding projects in Acadia, Cameron, Jefferson Davis, and Vermilion Parishes in Louisiana

4.5.4 USDA NRCS OUTREACH EVENTS FOR NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT IN FY 2025

Louisiana NRCS has a major focus on reducing nutrient loads that empty into the Gulf of America through the rivers, bayous and other flowing bodies of water that pass through the state of Louisiana. Outreach staff of USDA FPAC NRCS organized and conducted a total of 51 events that brought together at least 3,560 individuals for these activities focused on nutrient management.

These 51 Outreach Events focused on nutrient management took place in 25 different Parishes of Louisiana during FY 2025:

- Highest participation was in Lafourche Parish with 490 individuals attending six events.
- Second highest was in Orleans Parish with 440 attendees gathering for six events.
- Avoyelles Parish showed high attendance with 409 people who met at four events.

Table 22. USDA NRCS Outreach Events for Nutrient Management in FY 2025 across Louisiana.

Type of Outreach Event for Nutrient Management	Total Number of Participants	Total Number of Events	Total Number of Parishes
Conference	500	5	5
Field Day	1,768	21	16
Technical or Group Meeting	1,037	19	14
Workshop	255	6	4
Total	3,560	51	39 (1)

Footnote (1): Total number of parishes where events were conducted was 25 parishes in FY 2025. Some parishes had more than one event.

4.6 WATERSHED COORDINATORS AND WATERSHED GROUPS

Watershed groups and WSCs continue to serve as valuable partners in implementing Louisiana's NPS program. In FFY 2025, LDEQ continued to collaborate with Capital RC&D, BTNEP, LRWA, and BVD. These partnerships accomplish several goals listed in Louisiana's NPS Management Plan including:

- Involving appropriate stakeholders in watershed implementation;
- Statewide and watershed-specific educational programs;
- Assisting in identifying priority areas in the watershed for BMPs implementation;
- Outreach and education to homeowners on OSDS operation and maintenance in watershed priority areas;
- Water quality monitoring and data analyses to evaluate water quality changes; and
- Assisting in preparing success stories and identifying future actions needed to achieve success.

These WSC and watershed groups are dedicated to restoring and preserving the water quality in the areas where they live and serve.

4.6.1 CAPITAL RC&D

At the end of September 2025, Capital RC&D was continuing work on its "Nonpoint Source (NPS) Pollution Reduction through On-Site Wastewater Disposal Systems (OSDS) Inspections, Educational Outreach, and Sampling" project. This project is scheduled to end on March 31, 2026, when Capital RC&D will cease operations. The project targets five watersheds: Yellow Water River, Comite River, Middle Amite River, Natalbany River, and New River. These watersheds were listed on Louisiana's IRs as not supporting one or more designated uses of primary contact recreation (PCR), secondary contact recreation (SCR), and fish and wildlife propagation (FWP).

The goal of this project is to reduce NPS pollution with the objectives of improving surface water quality and restoring support for CWA designated uses, and maintaining healthy waters. This goal is accomplished by monitoring water quality to determine critical areas with high FC concentrations in the watersheds. These areas then become the focus of OSDS inspections to ensure properly functioning systems. Both Capital RC&D and partners work together to accomplish the goals of the project. During the period of October 2024 – September 2025, 2,273 OSDSs were inspected. Of the 2,273 OSDSs inspected, 543 were found to be not working and 465 OSDSs were repaired (some had been inspected during a previous project period). Capital RC&D estimated that a total load reduction of 8,835,000 colony-forming units of FC bacteria was achieved in the watersheds during this project period.

Figure 3. Ditch in front of home polluted due to home waste system not working

Figure 3. Overflow from waste tank needing to be pumped out due to aerator not functioning

4.6.2 BARATARIA–TERREBONNE NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM

This fiscal year BTNEP and LDEQ continued their partnership, which was initiated in 2016, completing its eighth successful year in the Bayou Folse watershed restoration, through the ongoing project: "Water Quality Sampling, On-Site Waste Disposal Systems (OSDS) Inspections and Educational Outreach in the Barataria-Terrebonne Basins." This project supports the NRCS, the Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District, and other cooperative work, under the Bayou Folse watershed plan, to address water quality issues in this subsegment.

Bayou Folse is impaired for FWP due to low dissolved oxygen (DO), nutrients, and sediment. In addition, sampling results from multiple sites within the watershed show high concentrations of FC bacteria. There are more than 4,600 home sewage systems in this watershed, many are poorly functioning and not maintained. Bayou Folse also receives runoff from pastureland and row crop agriculture, which adds further loading of sediments, nutrients, and bacteria. In an effort to address these issues, the watershed implementation plan calls for reduced loading caused by malfunctioning home sewage treatment systems and from agricultural runoff.

Partners continue to target for NPS reduction measures based on past sampling and track changes in water quality over time through current monitoring data in their effort to restore water quality through education, conservation implementation, and outreach to address malfunctioning OSDS.

Over the past year, October 2024 to September 2025, BTNEP collected water quality data at ten sampling locations within the subsegment, conducted various water quality education events for the general public, continued working with local governmental organizations, and continued home sewage inspections, all toward addressing malfunctioning home sewage systems in the watershed. Over the course of the project, BTNEP conducted 12 sampling events that included measuring field parameters, such as temperature, pH and DO, and collecting grab samples for laboratory analysis of nutrients, sediment, FC bacteria. In addition, velocity measurements were taken at the ambient water quality monitoring site to estimate flow.

As part of continued efforts to provide education and outreach within the watershed, BTNEP hosted and participated in various education and outreach events. This included over 170 education and outreach events in addition to OSDS educational outreach. These events offer the opportunity for BTNEP to provide information and educate residents and other members of the public about water quality issues in Bayou Folse, nonpoint source pollution processes, and ways to reduce runoff pollution. Also, BTNEP distributed information through its website and social media posts.

BTNEP outreach also included informing homeowners in the region on the importance of maintaining properly functioning home sewage treatment systems. BTNEP oversaw 399 inspections of home treatment systems to determine operational status, need for repairs, and conduct homeowner education. The OSDS inspector performed 52 re-inspections as a follow-up to determine repair status.

4.6.3 BAYOU VERMILION DISTRICT

The "Nonpoint Source Pollution Reduction through On-Site Wastewater Disposal Systems (OSDS), Inspections and Educational Outreach in Vermilion River" project was created to reduce the level of FC contamination in the Vermilion River by conducting individual home sewer system inspections, educating occupants and homeowners, and conducting an outreach campaign to help support primary and secondary contact recreation in the river. The 2025 inspection program consisted of 1,790 site visits. Through September 30, 2025, a total of 63 septic system locations were tested. Refer to the table below.

Table 23. "Nonpoint Source Pollution (NPS) Reduction through On-Site Wastewater Disposal Systems (OSDS), Inspections and Educational Outreach in Vermilion River" project monthly inspections progress, 2025

Monthly Inspections Progress 2025							
Month	**Total for the Month**	**Total Initial Inspected**	**Passed**	**Failed**	***Total times re-inspected**	**Re-inspected & passed**	***Re-inspected & failed**
January	7	6	5	1	1	0	1
February	9	2	1	1	7	7	0
March	5	0	0	0	5	3	2
April	10	6	6	0	4	4	0
May	2	0	0	0	2	2	0
June	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
July	2	0	0	0	2	2	0
August	16	10	7	3	6	5	1
September	12	8	5	3	4	2	2
October	0	0			0		
November	0	0			0		
December	0	0			0		
Total	63	32			31		
					*** NA not included in tally.**		

4.6.4 LOUISIANA RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION

The LRWA is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting public health and assisting operators of small water and wastewater systems across the state in an effort to protect public health and the environment of Louisiana. This mission is accomplished through comprehensive training, on-site technical assistance, and state operator certification. In collaboration with LDEQ, LRWA conducted OSDS inspections and provided targeted workshops on an as-needed basis to enhance water quality and help restore designated uses to impaired watersheds. Between September 1, 2024 and August 31, 2025, LRWA conducted initial OSDS inspections in Vermilion and St. Martin Parishes.

The LRWA provided education to residents regarding the proper maintenance of their home sewage systems and increased awareness of the dangers and negative environmental impacts associated with malfunctioning systems, particularly on local waterways. The LRWA effectively communicated the importance of maintaining home sewage systems through a door-to-door outreach campaign, which allowed them to speak directly with homeowners. At each site visit, the field inspector reviewed the proper operation and maintenance practices, answered homeowner questions, and conducted a visual inspection of the system. If the homeowner was not available, the inspector left an educational brochure, which explained the purpose of the inspection and offered a complimentary sewer system evaluation.

In order to raise public awareness of OSDS inspections and education, informational brochures were distributed at city and town halls, parish presidents were notified via letter and/or phone calls, and public advertisements were placed to generate local interest and encourage participation. The informational brochures, made available in public locations, served as an effective tool to engage residents who weren't initially included in the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) OSDS distribution list, as well as those who had originally declined inspections.

The tables below detail the inspection results by parish.

Table 24. LRWA inspections in Vermilion Parish

Vermilion Parish Inspection Results		
150	**Total Locations to Inspect (*remaining from previous project period*)**	
43	**Contacted/spoke with homeowners**	
	41	sewer inspections conducted - initial
	2	homeowners refused inspection - initial
41	**Inspections conducted: results**	
	36	systems in good condition - initial
	5	systems not operating or in poor condition - initial
107	**No contact made with homeowners**	
	107	no one home/distributed flyers - initial
150	**Total flyers distributed**	
	107	no one home - initial
	41	sewer inspections conducted - initial
	2	homeowners refused inspection - initial

Table 25. LRWA inspections in St. Martin Parish

St. Martin Parish Inspection Results		
3,434	**Total Locations to Inspect**	
1,528	**Contacted/spoke with homeowners**	
	1,492	sewer inspections conducted - initial
	36	homeowners refused inspection - initial
1,492	**Inspections conducted: results**	
	1,447	systems in good condition - initial
	45	systems not operating or in poor condition - initial
1,906	**No contact made with homeowners**	
	1,906	no one home/distributed flyers - initial
3,434	**Total flyers distributed**	
	1,906	no one home - initial
	1,492	sewer inspections conducted - initial
	36	homeowners refused inspection - initial

5.0 MEETING NPS MILESTONES

Louisiana's NPS Management Plan includes annual milestones. In FFY 2025, Louisiana's NPS program continued its focus on watershed planning, assessment, monitoring and implementation in 22 waterbodies. The tables below show LDEQ's and LDAF's work towards management plan milestones.

Table 26. LDEQ and partner activity in watersheds: planning (P), assessment (A), monitoring (M) and implementation (I) in FFY2025

Basin	Waterbody	Subsegment	Planning	Assessment	Monitoring	Implementation	Sampling Plan Dates	Sampling Team	BMP Implementation or OSDS Inspections	BMP Implementation/ OSDS Inspection Dates	WIP
Lake Pontchartrain	Comite River	040103	X	X	X	X	01/09/23-01/09/26	LDEQ Water Surveys	Capital RC&D/ OSDS Inspections	2015 - 2026	
	Middle Amite River	040302	X	X	X	X	01/12/24-01/12/27	Capital RC&D	Capital RC&D/ OSDS Inspections	2017 -2026	
	Yellow Water River	040504	X	X	X	X	09/26/23-09/26/26	Capital RC&D	Capital RC&D/ OSDS Inspections	2013 - 2026	
	Natalbany River	040302	X	X	X	X	01/24/25-01/24/28	LDEQ Water Surveys	Capital RC&D/ OSDS Inspections	2020 - 2026	
Mermentau	Bayou Des Cannes	050101	X	X	X	X	07/01/24-07/01/27	LDEQ Water Surveys	LDAF	2014 - present	Approved 2017
	Bayou Mallet	050103	X	X	X	X	01/07/25 - 01/07/28	LDAF	USDA/LDAF	2015- present	Approved 2017
	Bayou Queue de Tortue	050501	X	X	X	X	09/26/23-09/26/26	LDEQ Water Surveys	LDAF	2012-2023	Approved 2013
	Bayou Chene	050603	X	X	X	X	08/19/24-08/19/27	LDEQ Water Surveys	LDAF	2014-2023	Approved 2020
Vermilion-Teche	Bayou Courtableau	060204	X	X	X		03/22/23-03/22/26	LDEQ Water Surveys	LDAF	TBD	WIP document being drafted
	Bayou du Portage	060703	X	X	X	X	05/04/23 - 05/04/26	LDEQ Water Surveys	LDAF	2019-present	Approved 2019
	Vermilion River	060801	X	X	X	X	08/19/24-08/19/27	LDEQ Water Surveys	LDAF and Bayou Vermilion District/OSDS Inspections	2021-2026	Approved 2021
	Bayou Teche	060301 060401 & 060501	X	X	X		06/12/25-06/12/28	LDEQ Water Surveys			WIP document being drafted
	Bayou Courtableau	060204	X	X	X		03/22/23-03/22/26	LDEQ Water Surveys	LDAF	LDAF Work Plan TBD	WIP document being drafted
Ouachita	Big Creek (North)	080903	X	X	X	X	08/19/24-08/19/27	LDEQ Water Surveys	LDAF	2017-2022	Approved 2018
	Hemphill Creek	081609	X	X	X	X	04/25/24-04/25/27	LDEQ Water Surveys	LDAF	2017-TBD	Approved 2017
	Bayou Bartholomew	080401	X	X	X		01/06/23-01/06/26	LDEQ Water Surveys	LDAF	TBD	Approved 2025
	Lake St. Joseph	081202	X	X	X	X	03/06/23-03/06/26	LDEQ Water Surveys	LDAF	BIL Funds	
Terrebonne	Bayou Folse	120302	X	X	X	X	02/04/25-02/04/28	BTNEP	USDA-NRCS (NWQI)/BTNEP	2022- present	Approved 2018
	Bayou Grosse Tete	120104	X	X	X	X	08/19/24-08/19/27	LDEQ Water Surveys	LDAF	2022-present	Approved 2022
	Bayou Maringouin	120111	X	X	X	X	09/24/24-09/24/27	LDEQ Water Surveys	LDAF	2024-present	Approved 2022
Mississippi	Thompson Creek	070502	X	X	X	X	04/25/24-04/25/27	Capital RC&D	Capital RC&D/OSDS Inspections	2017-2024	
Red River	Bayou Cocodrie	101601	X	X							

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)
Louisiana Department of Agriculture Forestry (LDAF)
Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BTNEP)
U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS)

National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI)
Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP)
On-site sewage disposal system (OSDS)

Table 27. LDAF Progress toward FFY 2025 Workplan Goals

LDAF Progress Towards FFY 2025 Workplan Goals	
Workplan Goal 1	Increase public outreach and implement conservation Best Management Practices (BMPs) on agricultural land.
Through a multifaceted approach, LDAF was able to create and implement an Outreach and Stewardship plan, outlining the development and implementation of outreach, marketing, capacity building and educational initiatives that align with both the goals of the LDAF and 319 NPS Reduction Program.	Project WET- To increase outreach efforts, LDAF has continued and enhanced its partnership with Project Water Education Today (WET). Project WET offers a custom water science curriculum guide that was established to disperse educational materials, provide hands-on training to educators, students and communities, and train educators to implements water science and conservation into classroom curricula. In 2025, outreach and education events reached over 6,000 individuals. Events hosted by LDAF included facilitator trainings, educator workshops, student trainings and presentations, and educator and farmer outreach. Locally Led Conservation Meetings – Each of the 44 SWCDs hosts an annual locally led information gathering meeting, inviting community stakeholders within the district to identify and discuss natural resource concerns. Following the locally led meetings, local work groups meet to prioritize concerns, and conservation needs for each District, leading to the seeking of continual technical and financial funding to address these needs. In 2019, the most prioritized local resource concern was damage to public and private lands from feral hogs. Through partnerships and grant opportunities, the LDAF worked with seven SWCDs to initiate the Feral Swine Eradication Pilot Program, allowing for the purchase of trapping equipment and salaries for hired technicians to provide free assistance to landowners to trap and eradicate feral hogs. In 2022, over $325,000 dollars were allocated to LDAF for the purpose of expanding the trapping program to all SWCDs outside of the pilot districts. As of September 31, 2025, 40 of Louisiana's SWCDs continuously offer net or cage traps to cooperators for feral hog abatement, reducing or eliminating natural resources damages cause by swine, including NPS pollution. Conservation Field Days - Typically hosted by a local producer, in partnership with the local SWCD, educational institutions, and other conservation partners, field days can increase landowner/producer awareness through farmer-to-farmer education and support. By hosting trainings, presentations and demonstrations on-farm or on-ranch, BMPs, equipment, and research and results relative to the producers can be highlighted and discussed. Field days can be planned around specific conservation practices, new technology, cost-effective management approaches and supporting peer-to-peer learning and support. SWCDs statewide host conservation field days for producers to learn more about new innovations and traditional conservation practices. Recent field days include the LaSalle SWCD grain drill demonstration, St. Martin SWCD sugar cane residue management modification, Vermilion and LSU AgCenter Model Farm, Acadia and Northeast cover crops, and more. BMP Videos – To build community awareness and support for Best Management Practices (BMPs), LDAF has developed a series of promotional videos showcasing specific on-farm agricultural conservation practices. These short-form videos (typically 3–5 minutes) are designed to engage the public and introduce conservation concepts to new audiences. Featuring insights from conservation partners, educational institutions, and producers, each episode highlights the goals, partnerships, and outcomes of the practices being implemented. Through a partnership with Movee Media, LDAF has produced three episodes in the "Good Lands" video series, which are available on the LDAF website and YouTube channel. The series focuses on various Louisiana agricultural commodities and the conservation practices used to address resource concerns. As of September 31, 2025, featured commodities include rice/crawfish, silvopasture, and sugarcane. Looking ahead, funding has been approved to expand the series with additional episodes. Production of new videos is scheduled to begin in January 2026, with future topics expected to include corn, cotton, soybeans, and more. These upcoming episodes will continue to highlight

the importance of conservation in Louisiana agriculture and the collaborative efforts driving its success.

Demonstration Models – Water science demonstration models are utilized statewide to show how water systems and products work. Models are used at school visits, field days, and outreach events participated in by districts.
To increase public awareness of nonpoint source pollution and provide water education, LDAF is purchasing and distributing water science demonstration models to, at a minimum, one SWCD in each of the five areas of Louisiana. These water science demonstration models currently include Enviroscapes, which are portable interactive watershed models intended to provide community education on issues that affect the environment, including NPS pollution. Enviroscapes purchased have been used at schools, fairs, festivals, and trainings.
As of September 31, 2025, a total of four demonstration models have been purchased and used for educational trainings and outreach, in addition to the two that were previously available through the LDAF.

Implementation of BMPs – 20 BMPs have been implemented on more than 35,000 acres of land providing conservation benefits to agricultural lands. These BMPs can be found in the table below.

BMP	Row Crop/Commodity Crop Use	Pastureland Use
Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan	X	X
Nutrient Management Plan	X	X
Soil Testing	X	X
Brush Management		X
Herbaceous Weed Treatment		X
Short Term Storage of Animal Waste and Byproducts	X	X
Conservation Cover	X	
Conservation Crop Rotation	X	
Residue and Tillage Management – No Till/Strip-Till	X	
Cover Crops	X	X
Critical Area Planting	X	X
Residue and Tillage Management – Reduced Till	X	
Fence		X
Field Border	X	
Filter Strip	X	
Grade Stabilization Structure	X	X
Irrigation Pipeline	X	
Precision Land Forming	X	
Irrigation Land Leveling	X	
Forage and Biomass Planting		X
Livestock Pipeline		X
Prescribed Grazing		X
Heavy Use Area Protection		X
Structure for Water Control	X	
Nutrient Management	X	X
Pest Management	X	X
Vegetative Barrier	X	
Watering Facility		X
Waste Transfer	X	X
Water Well		X

Workplan Goal II The Ag Solid Waste Program currently offers limited cost share reimbursement of all agricultural solid waste products for eligible recipients. Eligible wastes for transport include but are not limited to, poultry litter, separated dairy waste, bagasse, stable waste, and arborist & silviculture wastes / wood chips. Program requirements and rules include the following.	Expand beneficial use of agricultural solid waste by cost-sharing its transport. Animal waste transport incentive cannot be approved for transport into nutrient impaired watersheds. Non-animal waste transport incentive can be approved in nutrient impaired watersheds with exception upon application review. Ag waste must be transported out of originating watershed (HUC8) Land application must be within a reasonable time. (45-60 days) Ag waste must be staged on headlands and away from waterways, ditches or highly erodible areas. Land application must be excluded from areas within 100 feet of all drainage ways and residences, and at least 300 feet from wells, springs, streams, and ponds. As of September 31, 2025, eight producers have transported and applied 8,377 tons of agricultural solid waste in non-impaired nutrient watersheds.

Table 28. LDAF and Partner Progress toward FFY 2024 Workplan Goals (non 319 funded activities)

LDAF and Partner Progress Toward FFY 2025 Workplan Goals (non 319 funded activities)	
Workplan Goal I	Marketing & Capacity Building The LDAF Office of Soil and Water Conservation (OSWC), in collaboration with the LDAF Communications Department and Louisiana's forty-four Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), continues to develop and distribute a wide range of publications that promote agricultural conservation practices, educational opportunities, and outreach efforts aimed at improving water quality and quantity across the state. Key outreach platforms include: The bi-weekly LDAF Market Bulletin, which reaches over 6,500 subscribers statewide. The LDAF website and social media channels, where articles, photos, and updates are regularly posted and shared by followers and partners. Since 2022, LDAF has produced its own SWCD Spotlight series, featuring up to four districts annually in the Market Bulletin. As of September 31, 2025, ten SWCDs have been highlighted, with plans to continue quarterly features in 2026. These spotlights offer readers insight into local conservation projects, resource concerns, and the unique role each district plays in supporting sustainable agriculture. In addition to statewide efforts, individual SWCDs have expanded their own outreach initiatives by hosting local field days outside of EPA-funded 319 project areas. These events provide hands-on learning opportunities for producers and community members to explore conservation practices tailored to their region. Districts have also introduced conservation-themed craft nights, which blend education with creativity to engage families and youth in environmental stewardship in a fun and accessible way. Annual Workplans, Reports & Grassroots Summaries Each year, all 44 SWCDs develop and update Annual Workplans that outline district-specific goals, strategies, and desired outcomes for locally led conservation programs. At the end of the year, districts compile Annual Reports to share progress toward these goals with stakeholders, partners, and legislative contacts. These reports demonstrate the impact of educational, technical, and financial support provided by the districts, while also identifying areas where additional resources are needed. To complement these reports, each district also produces a Grassroots Report—a concise, one-page summary highlighting key accomplishments, funding received, and outreach activities. These reports are designed for use in legislative outreach and advocacy, helping to promote the value and visibility of SWCDs and their contributions to conservation across Louisiana.

Producer resource leveraging by the Bayou Vermilion District and district cooperators has advanced our program tremendously.

The Bayou Vermilion District, in partnership with the Louisiana 319 NPS pollution program, works closely with the LDAF-OSWC to educate the public on on-site disposal system pump outs. Interested and eligible participants are provided cost share assistance through the LDAF-OSWC 319 NPS pollution project.

Outreach efforts continue to play a vital role in helping Louisiana SWCDs promote conservation and connect with their communities. Districts across the state are engaging in creative and locally tailored activities that foster public awareness and involvement. One standout example is the Northeast SWCD, which has launched a monthly "Crafting for Conservation" event. These themed craft nights bring children and parents together to create fun, hands-on projects that relate to conservation practices, such as painting pumpkins to represent soil health or making pinecone bird feeders to encourage wildlife

habitat awareness. These events not only educate participants about environmental stewardship but also strengthen community ties and encourage families to take an active interest in local conservation efforts. In addition, there has been a noticeable increase in interest among districts to host Water Festivals. After seeing the success of three festivals held in 2024, two additional districts have reached out requesting assistance in planning their own. The districts that initiated these events last year reported strong engagement and educational impact, particularly with students, and have committed to making Water Festivals an annual project. These festivals offer interactive learning experiences focused on water quality, conservation, and environmental science, helping to inspire the next generation of conservation-minded citizens.

Table 29. Acres and federal funds spent

Fiscal Year	Acres Under Contract	Federal Funds Spent
2020	16,230.88	$506,132.56
2021	34,172.6	$881,941.00
2022	8,881.22	$80,281.00
2023		$0
2024		$0

To address BMP monitoring and how LDAF works with partners to maintain an active role in conservation management of agricultural lands:

Implementation monitoring is used to determine loading data from start to finish of each watershed project. Implementation monitoring was recently used to determine the baseline of the two highest loading HUCs in Bayou Lafourche watershed, located in Morehouse SWCD. This data was used by the district to apply for and receive funding from the Gulf of Mexico Alliance to implement agricultural conservation practices to reduce hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico.

5.1 WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENTS

Louisiana's NPS Program continues to strive to make significant progress in partially or fully restoring NPS-impaired waterbodies. Louisiana's NPS Management Plan's milestones include EPA water quality measure WQ-10 for water quality improvements. Measure WQ-10 requests states to report on the number of watersheds identified in 2000 or subsequent years as primarily impaired by NPS pollutants that have been partially or fully restored. Previous annual reporting was based on RUSLE for sediment reductions, and more recent reporting is based on STEP-L. Note that Management Plan goals and milestones are expected to be amended to reflect more realistic sediment reduction targets as per STEP-L estimates of reductions associated with BMP implementation at the watershed scale.

Table 30. Statewide milestones for water quality improvement, based on LDEQ's 2024 IR

Statewide Milestones for Water Quality Improvement	2025
Number of waterbodies identified as being primarily NPS impaired that are partially or fully-restored (WQ-10): Identify fully restored water bodies in Appendix C of state's IR primarily impaired by NPS pollutants; review NPS related activities in watershed where water body was restored; write NPS success story; and identify activities to maintain water quality.	1
Estimated annual reductions in pounds of nitrogen from NPS to water bodies (from Section 319 funded projects) (WQ-9a): Annually review information from LDAF, USDA, watershed coordinators, NPS staff and stakeholders for NPS load reductions of nitrogen; and include information in NPS annual report.	28,310
Estimated annual reductions in pounds of phosphorus from NPS to waterbodies (from Section 319 funded projects) (WQ-9b): Annually review information from LDAF, USDA, watershed coordinators, NPS staff and stakeholders for NPS load reductions of phosphorus: and include information in NPS annual report.	7,814
Estimated annual reductions in tons of sediment from NPS to waterbodies (from Section 319 funded projects) (WQ-9c): Annually review information from LDAF, USDA, watershed coordinators, NPS staff and stakeholders for NPS load reductions of sediment: include information in NPS annual report.	970.4
Number of NPS impairments removed from LA's IR: Annually review state IR for NPS impairments (DO, FC, TSS, etc.) removed as a result of NPS activities and include information in NPS annual report. Compare the previous IR to the current IR.	1
Progress in reducing unliquidated obligations (ULO): Progress in reducing ULO for LDEQ was 41%. At the end of FFY25 LDAF's progress towards reducing the ULO was 15%.	Total process in reducing ULO = 44%

5.2 SUCCESS STORIES

A success story for Middle Amite River was written and submitted to USEPA. Middle Amite River (Subsegment 040302) has suffered impaired PCR use support due to fecal coliform bacteria since 2016. The integrated report identified home sewage treatment systems as a suspected source of that impairment. LDEQ, through a partnership with Capital RC&D, worked to address bacterial loading in the watershed. Capital performed individual home system inspections and educated residents on the importance of maintaining their systems, what to look for when performing their own inspections, and how to maintain them. Based on these efforts, PCR is once again a supported use in the river. A success story for this water quality restoration was written and submitted to EPA and are currently under review. Future success stories are likely to occur in areas where implementation has occurred with OSDS education/outreach, and in other areas where agricultural BMPs have been implemented, as determined by use restoration in the integrated reports. A success story for restoration of Hemphill Creek PCR use is in progress and will be submitted to EPA in early 2026.

6.0 STATEWIDE PROGRAMS

6.1 COASTAL NONPOINT POLLUTION CONTROL PROGRAM (CNPCP)

The Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program (CNPCP) is a cooperative effort spearheaded by the Louisiana Department of Energy and Natural Resources (LDENR) Office of Coastal Management (OCM). In May 2022 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and EPA submitted a letter stating Louisiana has satisfied all conditions of approval on its coastal nonpoint program developed under Section 6217 of the Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments.

OCM participates in all of the programs described below, and LDEQ participates in many of them. These programs are generally employed statewide, although some are focused on the coastal zone.

6.1.1 HYDROLOGIC MODIFICATION IMPACT ANALYSIS SUCCESS STORY

As part of the review process of proposed projects located within the Coastal Zone of Louisiana, the Office of Permitting and Compliance (OPC) evaluates potential impacts of proposed projects onto the local hydrology. OPC utilizes the Hydrologic Modification Impact Assessment (HMIA) as a tool to evaluate if a proposed use would negatively modify the existing hydrologic conditions, such as the runoff flow volume, distribution, and/or impact the quality of water upstream or downstream of a project. During this reporting period, OPC worked with applicants and their agents to preserve or improve the hydrologic conditions. The applicant in this case was replacing a water crossing in Cameron Parish. During the HMIA process OPC worked with the applicant and its agent to reevaluate the crossing aperture to maintain the appropriate conveyance of water across the new bridge.

6.1.2 REDUCING FLOOD RISK THROUGH WATERSHED MODELING

The Louisiana Watershed Initiative, in partnership with technical experts, universities and federal agencies, has completed development of hydrologic and hydraulic (H&H) models of Louisiana's watersheds, marking a critical milestone in the effort to reduce flood risks statewide. Following the 2016 floods, the state invested $130 million of its $1.2 billion Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) into gathering data and developing scientific models of Louisiana's major watershed to simulate flood scenarios and evaluate mitigation solutions. The models and underlying data are accessible through the Environmental Data and Model Catalog, or EnDMC, where users with experience in modeling software can create accounts to search and download models and simulations. Tools for visualization of model data are also under development.

6.1.3 LOUISIANA MASTER FARMER PROGRAM

The Louisiana Master Farmer Program is a Louisiana State University AgCenter-led initiative that teaches about conservation, resource management, and publishes best management practices on coastal non-point pollution. The program graduated its most recent class in their January ceremony in Baton Rouge. Five Master Farmers were recertified during the meeting of the Louisiana Association of Conservation Districts, and one new graduate was awarded the Master Farmer title. The program plans to continue its goal to lessen the environmental footprint left by agricultural operations, and ensure opportunities for future generations.

To become a Master Farmer, participants must attend educational sessions about environmental stewardship and develop plans for implementing conservation practices on their farms. To maintain the

Master Farmer designation, they must meet continuing education requirements and periodically be recertified.

The winners of the Outstanding Farmer Award, the Volentine brothers, have spent years farming cotton, corn, cattle and hay in Caddo Parish. They are active in their community and have raised more than $8,000 for local 4-H clubs. Volentine Farms has implemented practices like reduced tillage, crop rotation, tile drains and prescribed grazing, and recently expanded their cover crops.

6.1.4 BTNEP

The OCM sits on the management conference for the BTNEP. The BTNEP became recognized in 1990 as one of 28 National Estuary Programs through the United States, and it works to protect and preserve the culture and land located between the Mississippi and Atchafalaya Rivers in Southeast Louisiana. The management conference originally convened in 1990 to develop the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP), and it evolved to become an arena for producing open and frank discussions about some of the most critical coastal management issues.

6.1.5 LITTER ABATEMENT AND BEAUTIFICATION TASK FORCE

The state established a Task Force on Statewide Litter Abatement and Beautification, administered by the Lieutenant Governor's Office and Keep Louisiana Beautiful (KLB). The group is made up of 26 Task Force members—representatives from various state and local government agencies, businesses, private groups, and communities. They recently awarded $105,318 in Greener Grounds Grants to 16 organization in 13 parishes in Louisiana, supporting organization in implementing best practices for litter prevention and waste reduction at large outdoor events. "These Louisiana outdoor events are just some of the more than 400 festivals and events happening in our state each year, drawing visitors from around the world to experience our food, music, and culture. The Greener Grounds Grant helps ensure these events are not only fun and memorable, but also clean and sustainable. "By reducing litter and improving waste management, we protect our environment, enhance the visitor experience, and strengthen Louisiana's reputation as a world-class destination," said Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser. "A cleaner Louisiana means more people will want to visit, return, and share in the culture that makes our state so special."

6.2 DRINKING WATER PROTECTION PROGRAM

6.2.1 BACKGROUND

Congress mandated each state implement a Wellhead Protection Program (WHPP) that protects public water wells and a Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP) to assess potential susceptibility to contamination of all water sources utilized for drinking water supplies. The DWPP, which is what LDEQ calls its SWP program, combines the efforts of the WHPP and SWAP to prioritize protection activities. In accordance with Federal Register; Volume 68:205, LDEQ has included source water protection as part of its NPS program. The source water protection staff assists Louisiana's communities in protecting aquifers and surface waters (rivers, lakes, etc.) that are sources of drinking water.

The DWPP uses the State fiscal year (July 1 through June 30) for its calendar of assessment and protection activities and prioritizes target areas by watershed drainage basins. Protection activities implemented in targeted watersheds are outlined under Program Element 2 of Louisiana's FFY 2022 319 CWA Nonpoint Source Work Plan.

6.2.2 DRINKING WATER PROTECTION ACTIVITIES

Target areas for this reporting period were the Lake Pontchartrain Basin and the Vermilion-Teche Basin. Protection activities include, but are not limited to, updating source water assessment information, contingency planning, introduction of a model ordinance, public education and addressing specific issues. These activities may also occur outside of targeted basins shown in Figure 5, if an opportunity to do so presents itself, or if the need arises.

6.2.3 TARGET WATERSHEDS

All SWP information for public water supplies in the targeted watersheds will be updated according to the schedule in Table 31. The table also shows the number of wells and intakes scheduled for source water assessments. Source water assessment information is confirmed with the public water systems and, if required, updated contingency plans are prepared for each water system serving a population of 3,300 or fewer. Water systems serving populations exceeding 3,300 are required to develop or update risk assessments and emergency response plans under the American Water Infrastructure Act of 2018 and must certify completion to EPA. DEQ coordinates with the LRWA to provide assistance with these assessments and plans. The actual numbers for the source water assessment work accomplished within the watersheds for this reporting period are included under the Source Water Assessments section below. As this work continues, if a specific issue involving public water sources needs to be addressed or if any public education opportunities arise, the DWPP staff will respond as needed.

Table 31. Louisiana Source Water Protection Area Watershed Basin Plan

Louisiana Source Water Protection Area Watershed Basin Plan				
Fiscal Years	**Basin**	**Number Of: Wells**	**Intakes**	**Drinking Water Bodies**
2021 - 2025	Pontchartrain	623	0	N/A
	Pearl	101	0	N/A
	Mississippi	92	0	N/A
	3	816	0	N/A
2025-2028	Vermilion-Teche	555	3	Bayou Teche & Grand Lake
TOTAL	**4**	**1,371**	**3**	

Figure 4. Source Water Protection Program Schedule

6.2.4 SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENTS

During implementation of the DWPP source water assessment data are updated. The staff obtains Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates for new water wells and intakes and well photographs are taken for ease of identification. A protection area is delineated for the well or intake and GPS coordinates are obtained for all significant potential source of contamination (SPSOCs) identified within the protection area. Additionally, protection areas for wells and intakes already in the SWAP database are resurveyed to update SPSOC information and new photographs of wells are taken. Wells or intakes that are no longer in service are removed from the inventory along with their corresponding protection areas and SPSOCs. Applications developed to capture the data via mobile devices are used to update the database in real time.

During this reporting period, source water assessment data were collected for 183 public water sources and 1,613 SPSOCs. Updating this data is important because LDEQ and other agencies use it for pollution prevention, emergency response, and environmental investigations. The data are also used to generate source water assessment reports for public water supply systems. The Safe Drinking Water Act Consumer Confidence Report rule requires that all public water supply systems have a copy of their source water assessment report available for review by the public.

The SWAP Calculator program generates new source water assessment reports based on existing data and new data collected with mobile data collection applications. The reports contain basic well/intake information such as age, depth, aquifer/water body, delineated protection areas, SPSOCs, and a risk ranking for the water system.

6.2.5 PUBLIC EDUCATION

Public education is one of the main elements of the DWPP and there were various opportunities to inform citizens about drinking water source protection in both targeted and non-targeted areas. DWPP staff gave presentations or worked booths at the following locations/events; Northwest Louisiana Water Infrastructure Forum, Nonpoint Source Quarterly Partners Meeting, West Feliciana Middle School, Lafayette Louisiana Municipal Association Mayors' Meeting, Senator Adam Bass Water Infrastructure Forum, South Central Planning Meeting, LRWA Many Training, LRWA Annual Conference, Ground Water Protection Council.

6.3 STATEWIDE ON-SITE DISPOSAL SYSTEM PROGRAM

Many of Louisiana's watershed impairments are caused by high concentrations of FC bacteria. The state's numerical criteria for FC for designated uses can be found in Table 32.

Table 32. The State's numerical criteria for FC for designated uses

Designated Use	Louisiana numerical criteria
Primary Contact Recreation	FC: 400 CFUs/100 mL (May – Oct)
Secondary Contact Recreation	FC: 2,000 CFUs/100 mL
Public Water Supply	FC: 2,000 CFUs/100 mL
Oyster Propagation	FC: 14 CFUs/100 mL

LDEQ, WSCs, and watershed support groups continued to partner with LDH and the parish and/or local governments in developing education and outreach programs and assist in inspecting OSDSs located in priority watersheds. Table 33 depicts the watersheds and partners involved in OSDS inspection projects.

Table 33. OSDS Inspection Activity

Watershed	Project Summary
Comite River (040103)	In FFY2025, Capital RC&D conducted individual home sewage inspections. Monitoring was conducted by LDEQ Water Surveys personnel. Monitoring and inspections will continue through March 31, 2026.
Yellow Water River (040504)	In FFY2025, Capital RC&D conducted monitoring and individual home sewage inspections. Monitoring and inspections will continue through March 31, 2026.
Middle Amite River (040302)	In FFY2025, Capital RC&D conducted monitoring and individual home sewage inspections. Monitoring and inspections will continue through March 31, 2026.
Natalbany River (040503)	In FFY2025, Capital RC&D conducted individual home sewage inspections. Monitoring was conducted by LDEQ Water Surveys personnel. Monitoring and inspections will continue through March 31, 2026.
New River (040404)	In FFY2025, Capital RC&D conducted individual home sewage inspections. Monitoring was conducted by LDEQ Water Surveys personnel. Monitoring and inspections will continue through March 31, 2026.
Thompson Creek (070502)	In FFY2025, Capital RC&D conducted monitoring and individual home sewage inspections. Inspections ended in January 2024 and monitoring ended January 2025.
Vermilion River (060801)	In FFY 2025, BVD and LDAF continued education and outreach and home sewage inspections. LDEQ Water Surveys will continue conducting monitoring in 2026.
Bayou Folse (120302)	In 2025, BTNEP continued water quality monitoring and education-outreach. Through local partnership, in August 2020 BTNEP began inspecting home sewage treatment systems to assure proper functioning. This effort will continue into 2026.
6217 Coastal Management Area in Coastal Louisiana	In FFY2025, LDEQ-NPS continued its partnership with LRWA and conducted OSDS inspections; and utilized focused/project-targeted workshops on an as-needed basis. This effort will continue into 2026.

Evaluation of continuing inspections in the watersheds will be made based on water quality data obtained from the ambient water quality network sites in each subsegment. Criteria for the designated uses will be used to determine whether NPS bacteria are being reduced and progress is being made towards meeting water quality standards in each subsegment.

7.0 OUTREACH AND EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

LDEQ, LDAF, partners, and WSCs all worked together to conduct education and outreach across the state. Each department realizes the importance of sharing its findings and continued education of the public to promote watershed restoration. LDEQ participated in nine (9) outreach and educational events across the state this fiscal year, and LDAF participated in 30 events. These events targeted people of all ages. The Enviroscape model/video allows viewers to see how water moves through an array of landscapes, from urban to agricultural, illustrating the interconnectedness of our waterways and the transportation of NPS pollution. In FFY 2025, LDEQ reached over 10,000 adults and students through the following events:

7.1 LDEQ'S OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

October 12, 2024 – Wild Things

This event entailed hands-on activities engaging children and adults with conservation and outdoor related activities during the celebration of National Wildlife Refuge Week. It took place at the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services in Southeast Louisiana at the National Wildlife Refuges Complex in Lacombe, Louisiana. There were 7,200 participants.

Figure 5. LDEQ scientist, Gabrielle Gremillion, demonstrates Enviroscape model at Wild Things event.

November 8, 2024 – Villa Del Rey STEAM Day

This event took place in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Villa del Rey Elementary celebrated National STEAM Day, honoring the importance of science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics in education. There were 350 participants.

Figure 6. LDEQ scientist, India Ambeau, educates students on the Enviroscape model at Villa del Rey School.

January 30, 2025 – Westdale Heights STEAM Night

This event took place in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The Enviroscape watershed/NPS model was used to educate students about the types and sources of water pollution and how to protect Louisiana's water quality. There were 250 participants.

Figure 7. LDEQ scientist, India Ambeau, educates students on the Enviroscape model

February 12, 2025 – Park Forest Elementary

This event took place in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The Enviroscape watershed/NPS model was used to educate students about the types and sources of water pollution and how to protect Louisiana's water quality. There were 480 participants.

February 26, 2025 – Livingston Parish Water Festival

This event took place in Livingston, Louisiana. Capital SWCD Water Festival is designed to educate students with hands-on activities regarding water quality, literacy, use, pollution, and conservation. There were 300 participants.

February 27, 2025 – STEM Day Woodlawn Middle School

This event took place in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. LDEQ NPS Unit participated in STEM Day at Woodlawn Middle School. STEM DAY showcases STEM careers, programs, and other amazing opportunities the community has to offer. The Enviroscape Model was used to educated students about the causes and sources of nonpoint source pollution. There were 300 participants.

July 7, 2025 – Ducks Unlimited Greenwing's Youth Event

This event was held at Bogue Falaya Park in Covington, Louisiana. The Greenwing Youth Event is set up to educate children on the importance of Louisiana's wetlands as well as the conservation of hunting and fishing. The Enviroscape Model was used to educate students about the causes and sources of nonpoint source pollution. There were 100 participants.

Figure 8. **LDEQ scientist, Gabrielle Gremillion, exhibits the Enviroscape model to discuss Nonpoint Source Pollution.**

August 23, 2025 – SELU Back to School STEM Fest

This event was held in Hammond, Louisiana. The Back to School STEM Fest is a celebration of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, aimed at inspiring and connecting individuals of all ages with the wonders of these fields. There were 400 participants.

Figure 9. LDEQ scientists, Amy Mack, Gabrielle Gremillion, and Vincent Hart demonstrate the Enviroscape model at the SELU STEM Fest.

Figure 10. LDEQ scientists, Amy Mack, Gabrielle Gremillion, and Vincent Hart demonstrate the Enviroscape model at the SELU STEM Fest.

September 27, 2025 – National Hunting and Fishing Day

National Hunting and Fishing Day was hosted by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) on September 27, 2025, at Waddill Outdoor Education Center. Louisiana's National Hunting and Fishing Day includes exhibits on LDWF's research and conservation efforts, shooting and fishing demonstrations, and exhibits from local chapters of Ducks Unlimited, the Safari Club, and the Coastal Conservation Association, as well as local businesses. LDEQ facilitated a water quality trivia game for adults and kids. There were over 1,400 participants.

Figure 11. LDEQ Scientist, Aimee Préau, discusses methods to reduce NPS runoff at the National Hunting and Fishing Day

In collaboration with Louisiana's 44 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), LDAF participated in over 30 outreach and educational events, reaching more than 10,000 individuals, including students, educators, landowners, and community members across the state. These efforts targeted a broad audience—from young children to adults—through a variety of platforms and activities.

Outreach initiatives included:

- Community programs
- Hands-on workshops and trainings
- Field days and school visits
- Social media campaigns
- Interagency and municipal collaborations

During these events, participants engaged in interactive water science activities that emphasized the importance of protecting Louisiana's water resources—both in terms of quantity and quality—and explored conservation practices that support long-term sustainability.

Beyond LDAF-led efforts, SWCDs hosted their own locally led meetings, field days, discussion forums, and monthly board meetings, all aimed at expanding conservation education and outreach within their communities. Many of these activities were initiated at the request of partnering organizations, including schools, universities, municipalities, and agricultural stakeholders.

The documented outreach efforts below reflect those attended by LDAF staff and demonstrate the growing demand for conservation education across Louisiana.

7.2 LDAF'S OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

October 12, 2024 – Family Day at the Farm (Acadia SWCD)

Acadia SWCD hosted a family-friendly event at a local cooperator's farm, welcoming over 150 attendees. Activities included a children's corner focused on soil and plant health, a petting zoo, live music, an expo area featuring conservation partners, and a guided tour showcasing implemented BMPs that enhance conservation practices on the property.

November 11, 2024 – Early Childhood Association Annual Conference

LDAF hosted an expo booth to engage educators on integrating conservation education into early childhood classrooms. The effort was supported through partnerships with Louisiana Project WILD and Project Learning Tree.

November 13, 2024 – STEAM Career Day at Fort Polk (Calcasieu SWCD)

Calcasieu SWCD participated in a career day event, introducing 5th grade students to careers in agriculture and conservation.

November 20, 2024 – Louisiana Environmental Education Commission (LEEC) Meeting

Quarterly meeting of the LEEC, bringing together conservation education professionals to enhance environmental curriculum in Louisiana schools.

December 11, 2024 – Louisiana STEAM Alliance Meeting

Quarterly meeting of the STEAM Alliance, a collaborative group of conservation educators and partners discussing upcoming outreach events, trainings, and initiatives.

January 7–9, 2025 – LSU Ag Leadership Seminar (Class XIX)

Held in Baton Rouge, this seminar focused on Louisiana's agricultural commodities, port infrastructure, and the evolution of the state's waterways, preparing participants to be effective advocates for Louisiana agriculture.

January 8–10, 2025 – Louisiana Association of Conservation Districts (LACD) Annual Meeting

The annual LACD meeting featured guest speakers, partner collaboration sessions, and strategic discussions on promoting Louisiana agriculture and conservation efforts.

February 11–13, 2025 – LSU Ag Leadership Seminar (Class XIX)

Held in Thibodaux, this session focused on Louisiana's seafood industry, coastal restoration, wildlife agencies, and legislative updates.

February 26, 2025 – Capital SWCD Water Festival

Capital SWCD hosted its first Water Festival, engaging 300 fifth-grade students in East Baton Rouge Parish through five interactive stations focused on water quality, quantity, and conservation.

March 12, 2025 – Louisiana Envirothon

The state Envirothon competition was held in Baton Rouge, with over 50 students participating in hands-on challenges testing their knowledge of Louisiana's natural resources.

June 16, 2025 – 319 Technician Training Meeting

Statewide 319 technicians convened to collaborate on project implementation, reporting, and the development of a more uniform documentation process.

June 23, 2025 – UPSTREAM Educators Workshop

A Project WET workshop held in partnership with Louisiana Tech University's UPSTREAM educator program.

June 24, 2025 – H. Rouse Caffey Rice Field Day

Acadia SWCD joined conservation partners and agricultural professionals to promote the Bayou Queue de Tortue 319 Project.

June 26–27, 2025 – Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation Annual Convention

LDAF OSWC hosted an informational booth to raise awareness of SWCD programs and conservation initiatives.

July 8, 2025 – Mississippi River Delta Institute Educators Workshop

A Project WET workshop focused on water education for teachers in the Mississippi River Delta Institute Program.

July 21, 2025 – State Coordinator Meeting (Project WET, WILD, PLT)

Annual meeting of state coordinators to discuss ongoing efforts and collaboration across conservation education programs.

July 23, 2025 – 2029 Coastal Master Plan Meeting

A statewide meeting of conservation, agriculture, and water professionals to discuss the development and importance of Louisiana's 2029 Coastal Master Plan.

August 21, 2025 – Louisiana 4-H Agents Annual Conference

LDAF hosted an informational booth for Project WET in collaboration with Project WILD and PLT coordinators to promote conservation education among 4-H agents.

September 8–11, 2025 – Calcasieu SWCD Water Festival

Calcasieu SWCD hosted a multi-day Water Festival, engaging students in hands-on learning about water conservation and environmental stewardship.

September 15, 2025 – Soils and Land Use Training (Acadia SWCD)

Acadia SWCD hosted a training for FFA students in the Acadiana region to prepare for the Soils and Land Use Competition.

September 24, 2025 – Allen SWCD Forestry Contest

Allen SWCD hosted the annual Quad-Parish Forestry Contest, helping students prepare for the FFA Forestry Competition.

Links to outreach posts for LDAF can be found at the links below:

Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry – www.ldaf.la.gov

Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/LaAgandForestry/

Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/LouisianaSWCDs/

YouTube - https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCK6AJX9eDoaNXSzm_0nyA9Q/videos

X (Twitter) - x.com/laagandforestry

Instagram - https://www.instagram.com/laagandforestry/?hl=en

8.0 TRAINING

Continued training and education is essential to the success of the NPS program. Staff are encouraged to attend trainings that can add value to the program and increase knowledge of NPS practices and EPA methods. The following describes selected training events attended by NPS staff.

8.1 WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCES

8.1.1 LOUISIANA REMOTE SENSING & GIS WORKSHOP

- This annual workshop brings together GIS and remote sensing professionals from state government, academia, and the private sector to share dataset development, tools, practices, and other information related to mapping and spatial data analysis. May 6-8, 2025.

8.1.2 UPPER BARATARIA-TERREBONNE WATERSHED WORKSHOP

- LDEQ staff presented to NPS stakeholders as part of a workshop series hosted by the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program on water quality issues and activities in the upper Barataria-Terrebonne basins.
    - Workshop III October 1, 2024,
    - Workshop IV November 21 and December 3, 2024,
    - Workshop V March 12, 2025.

8.1.3 EPA TOOLS & RESOURCES WEBINAR SERIES

- Enhancing Nutrient Reduction Efforts with the National Nutrient Inventory. April 3, 2025.
- EPA Harmful Algal Blooms, Hypoxia, and Nutrients Research Webinar Series
    - Application of Stable Isotopes to Understand Environmental Processes in Multiple Habitats. March 26, 2025.
    - Connecting Soil Health and Water Quality in Agricultural Systems. May 7, 2025

8.1.4 EPA Healthy and Resilient Communities Research Webinar Series

- Restoring Aquatic Ecosystems to Improve Human Health and Well-being. June 10, 2025

8.1.5 ESRI TRAINING

- Make an Impact with Modern Geo Apps. Developing mapping applications using ESRI software. ESRI MOOC. September 25 - October 30, 2024.
- Cartography. Learn ArcPro map design tools. ESRI MOOC. August 27 - October 8, 2025.
- Migrating from ArcMap to ArcGIS Pro. February 18-19, 2025
- ESRI ArcGIS Pro Essential Workflows. February 25-27, 2025.

8.2 INDIVIDUAL TRAINING SESSIONS

- *Natural Channel Design.* LDEQ internal training class. December 5, 2024.
- *HAWQS Webinar.* EPA's Water Modeling hosted "HAWQS Version 2," a webinar presenting version 2 of the Hydrologic and Water Quality System (HAWQS). Speakers from Texas A&M discussed new input datasets, modeling functionality, and interface features. They presented an overview of HAWQS and what's new in v2.0; creating a project and scenarios, customizing scenario (SWAT) inputs, example BMP scenario, and output visualization. October 17, 2024.

- *Financing Agricultural Best Management practices with the Clean Water State Revolving Fund*. EPA. November 6, 2024
- *Nutrient Reduction Loss Strategies – What are Different States Doing?* North Central Region Water Network. March 12, 2025.
- *Updating historical flow permanence classifications with probabilistic continuous-value estimates.* USGS Hydrography Community. April 22, 2025.
- *Waters of the United States.* EPA and Army Listening Session for State and Local Governments. May 28, 2025.
- *Applying EPA's National Nutrient Inventory to quantify landscape nutrient inputs and interception to support state and local water quality objectives.* EPA ORD HHN Research Webinar. July 2, 2025
- *2025 Texas Watershed Planning Short Course*. This course gave participants insight on effective ways to build partnerships, characterize the watershed and identify pollutant sources, select management strategies, prioritize where they are implemented, and estimate levels of implementation needed to meet established water quality goals. Texas Water Resources Institute. January 27-30, 2025.
- *Lake Loading Response Model Training.* National 303(d) Restoring Our Impaired Waters Webinar Series. NEIWPCC. April 16, 2025.
- *Riparian Forest Buffers.* Watershed Forestry Webinar Series Webinar 2. USDA Forest Service. October 10, 2024

9.0 MEETINGS AND PARTICIPATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

- 2025 Annual Louisiana Association of Conservation Districts Meeting. January 8-10, 2025.
- Lake Providence Watershed Council, held quarterly.
- Louisiana GIS Council, held monthly.
- BTNEP Management Conference, meetings held quarterly.
- Louisiana Master Farmer, three NPS-given training sessions in FFY25.
- BTNEP Water Quality Action Plan Team, meetings held yearly.
- Louisiana Department of Transportation Topographic Mapping Advisory Committee, meetings held quarterly.
- LDEQ Water Program Workgroup, meetings held monthly.
- USGS Hydrography Community, meetings held 6-10 times per year.
- Louisiana Hypoxia Working Group, meetings held monthly.
- Soil and Water Conservation District meetings:
    - Lafayette SWCD Board Meeting 7/16/2025
    - St. Mary SWCD Board meeting 8/19/2025
    - St. Martin SWCD Meeting 8/21/2025
    - St. Landry SWCD Board Meeting 9/15/2025
    - Iberia SWCD Meeting 8/20/2025
    - Texas/Concordia SWCD 4/9/2025
    - Upper Delta SWCD Meeting 11/12/2024 and 12/10/2024
    - Upper Delta & NRCS New Roads/Addis Field Office locally led conservation meeting, 3/11/2025
- Louisiana NRCS Spring and Fall State Technical Committee, 10/8/2024 and 4/15/2025.
- Louisiana Litter Abatement Task Force, meeting held annually.
- Louisiana Environmental Education Commission, meetings 11/20/2024 and 3/17/2025.
- Bayou Vermilion District Water Quality Task Force, meetings held quarterly