

Office of Community Development

Disaster Recovery Unit

State of Louisiana

Division of Administration

JOHN BEL EDWARDS
GOVERNOR



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LA RECEIVES \$92 MILLION FROM U.S. DEPT. OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT FOR COASTAL COMMUNITIES, DISASTER RESILIENCE

BATON ROUGE – The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has awarded Louisiana \$92 million to implement two coastal resilience-building projects, after announcing the state was a winner in the National Disaster Resilience Competition.

This award will help resettle to a safer home the Native American community of Isle de Jean Charles in lower Terrebonne Parish and will also help implement Louisiana’s Strategic Adaptations for Future Environments, a resilience policy framework for the state’s hurricane-impacted areas.

“We greatly appreciate this targeted assistance from our federal partners,” **Governor John Bel Edwards** said. “As our citizens know, we are committed to leveraging all available funding sources and to using the best scientific and engineering resources available to us in order to protect our coastal communities and industries, while emphasizing development in lower-risk areas.”

Approximately \$48 million of the award is dedicated to resettling the residents of Isle de Jean Charles, which in 1955 was a 22,400 acre island. Now only 320 acres remain, putting this Native American community in critical need of locating a safer home. The award will fund a resettlement model that is scalable, transferrable and supportive of cultural and social networks.

“Unfortunately, severe loss of our lowlands is prompting the Isle de Jean Charles’ Native American population to resettle. Now we hope to accomplish this resettlement with a minimum of disruption to tribal livelihoods and lifestyles,” Terrebonne Parish President **Gordon Dove** said. “We anticipate this effort will provide a model for future climate-change resettlements across the country. Tribal cultural

traditions will stay alive as the tribe will now be able to come together to live in one community, not scattered as it is now.”

“We have been working on this for 13 years,” said Chief **Albert Naquin**, leader of the Isle de Jean Charles Band of the Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw tribe. “Finally, we can bring our people to a safe place to enjoy life together and move forward with better living conditions and a higher quality of life.”

In addition, more than \$39 million of the award will be used to implement LA SAFE – a framework to plan for and implement resilience-enhancing development strategies in hurricane-impacted areas of the state.

“The state created the LA SAFE resilience policy framework by combining the world-class science of the state’s Coastal Master Plan with the community-building planning and policy techniques we have honed over the decade of post-Katrina recovery efforts here in Louisiana,” said **Pat Forbes**, Executive Director of the Louisiana Office of Community Development.

Forbes thanked a team of state agencies, parish leaders and stakeholders who worked together with the Office of Community Development to apply for the award. These team members include: leaders of the Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw tribe; the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority; the Louisiana Housing Corporation; the Governor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness; Louisiana Office of Resource Management and Assistance; Louisiana Sea Grant; the University of New Orleans Center for Hazards Assessment, Response and Technology; and the Lowlander Center.

In addition to the state’s award, the City of New Orleans was also awarded an additional \$141 million in the NDRC competition for its application, which focused on establishing the City’s first-ever Resilience District in the Gentilly neighborhood. The City of New Orleans’ award brings the total amount awarded to Louisiana projects to **more than \$230 million**.

The NDRC was a national contest in which disaster-impacted jurisdictions vied for a portion of \$1 billion made available by HUD for projects to make communities more resilient against future shocks. It involved a two-phase process over the course of a year and was open to cities, counties and states that experienced presidentially-declared disasters in 2011, 2012 and 2013. \$180 million was earmarked for Hurricane Sandy affected-areas and the remaining \$820 million was available to jurisdictions nationwide.

The Disaster Recovery Unit within the Office of Community Development is dedicated to helping Louisiana's citizens recover from Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav, Ike and Isaac. As the state's central point for hurricane recovery, the OCD-DRU manages the most extensive rebuilding effort in American history, working closely with local, state and federal partners to ensure that Louisiana recovers safer, stronger and smarter than before.

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