

Planning at Warp Speed

The Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA) White Ditch Story

Lessons Learned
and Unavoidable Realities

NCER
3 August 2011

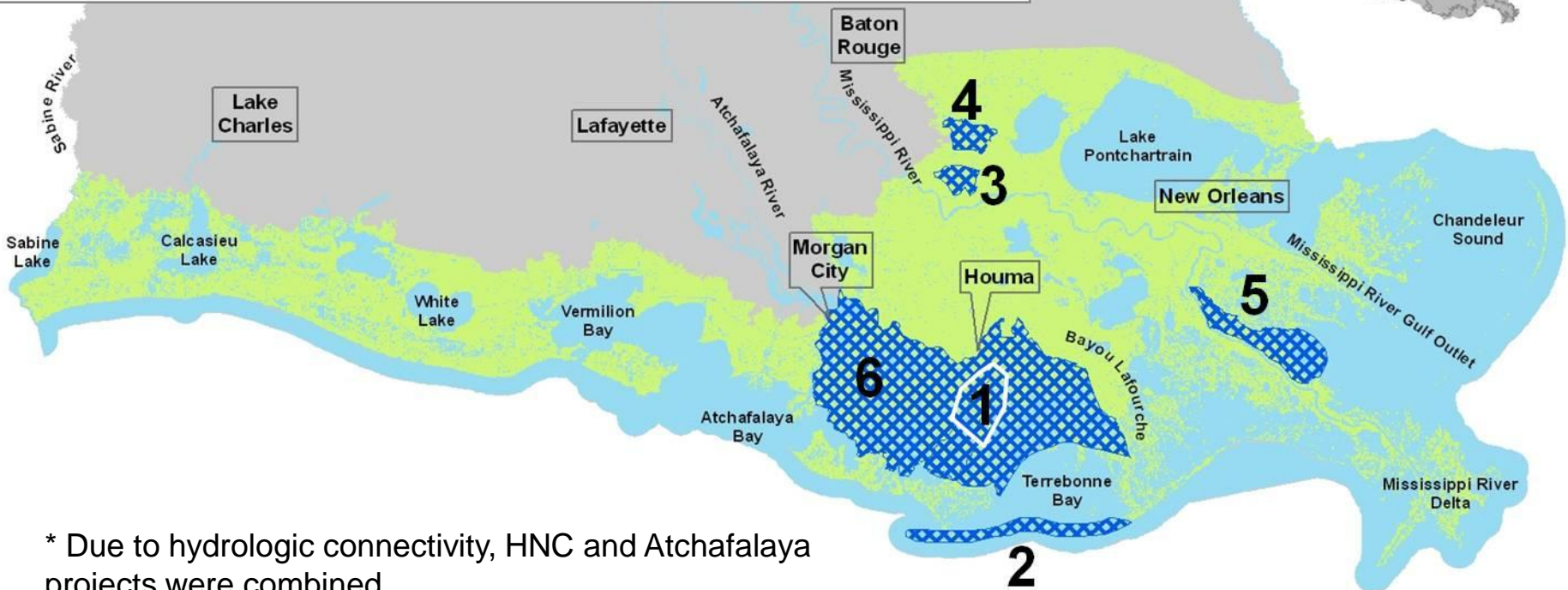


BUILDING STRONG®



LCA '6' Projects

1. Multi-purpose Operation of Houma Navigation Canal Lock (see #6)
2. Terrebonne Basin Barrier Shoreline Restoration (NER: \$646.9M)
3. Small Diversion at Convent / Blind River (\$116.8M)
4. Increase Amite River Diversion Canal Influence by Gapping Bank (\$15.2M)
5. Medium Diversion at White Ditch (\$365.2M)
6. Convey Atchafalaya River Water to Northern Terrebonne Marshes (w/ HNC)* (\$285.1M)



* Due to hydrologic connectivity, HNC and Atchafalaya projects were combined

Why Warp Speed?

- **Congressionally Mandated Deadline**
 - ▶ Contingent authorization for construction pending a favorable Chief's Report by December 31, 2010
 - ▶ Absolutely no flexibility in the schedule

- **National, State, and Local Priority**
 - ▶ Diverse representation at the kickoff meeting demonstrated the importance of the LCA 6

- **Rapidly Degrading Ecosystem**
 - ▶ Every moment counts – no time to wait
 - ▶ Sea level rise closing actionable window



The LCA White Ditch Experience...

- **Feasibility studies typically require 3-4 years**
- **The LCA '6' were concurrently completed in less than 2 years**
- **From Kick-off meeting (Jan 12, 2009) to Signed Chiefs Report (Dec 30, 2010) in 23 months**
 - **Six-Step Planning Process lasted 12 months**
 - **Review Process lasted 11 months**
 - **Went from a short description paragraph to a 1300+ page report**



Yes, in case you missed it...

- **12 Months of Six-Step Process**
 - Environmental and Topographical Surveys
 - H&H Modeling
 - Engineering and Design
 - Real Estate
 - NEPA and Environmental Compliance
 - Draft Document and most Appendices Completed

- **11 Months of Project Review**
 - District QA/QC
 - AFB
 - Public and Agency Review
 - Independent External Peer Review
 - Vertical Team Review
 - Legal Certification
 - Civil Works Review Board



Engage Warp Drive The Kickoff Meeting

- **Scope, Schedule, Budget (Repeat)**
- **No time to study everything**
- **Clearly document risks and assumptions and move forward**
- **Expectations were clear from the beginning and consequences of failure were well understood**

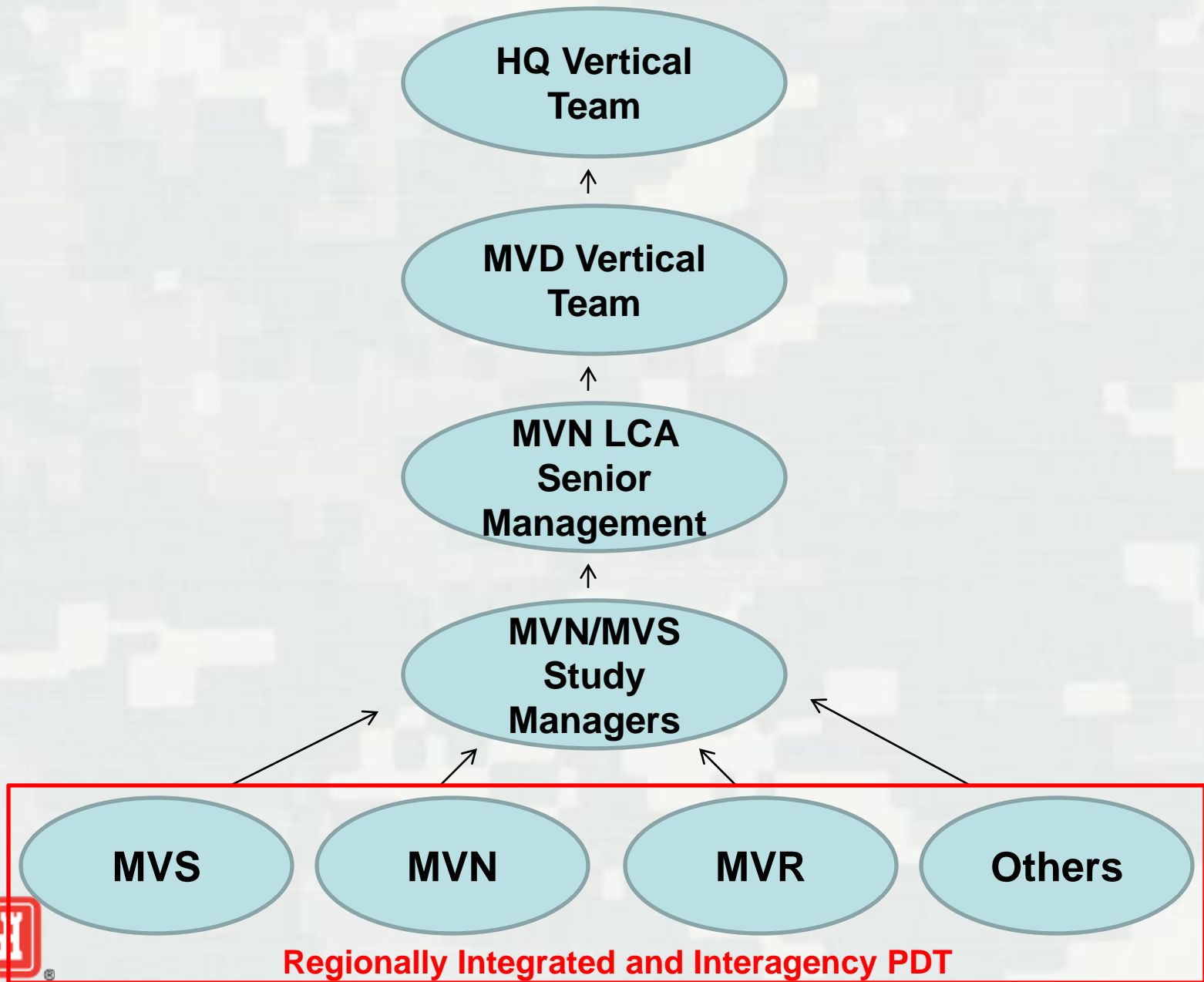




The White Ditch Team - A Unique Arrangement

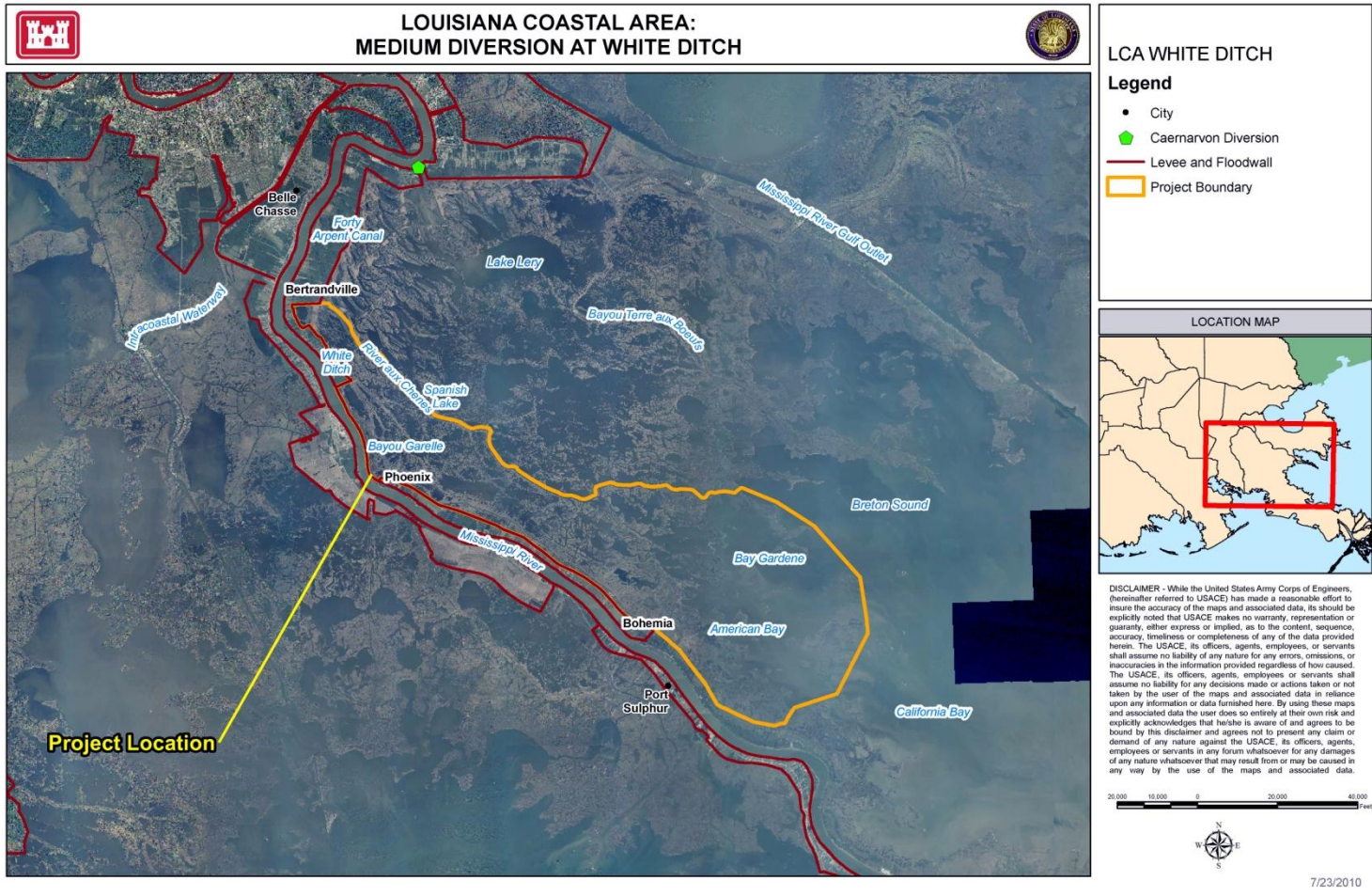
- **Fully Regionalized PDT**
 - ▶ New Orleans District
 - ▶ St Louis District
 - ▶ Rock Island District
 - ▶ ATR by Norfolk District
- **Integrated other Agencies onto PDT**
 - ▶ Louisiana OCPR
 - ▶ USFWS
 - ▶ NOAA/NMFS
 - ▶ USGS



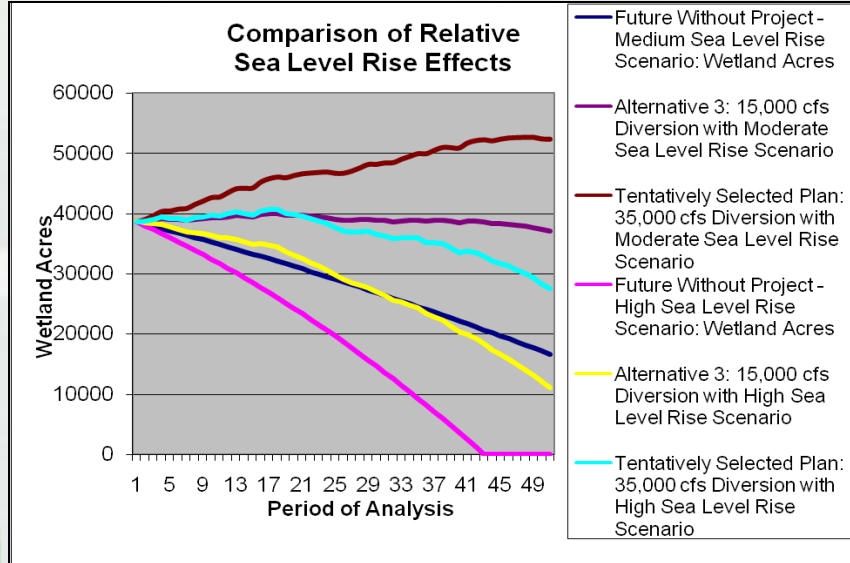


Regionally Integrated and Interagency PDT

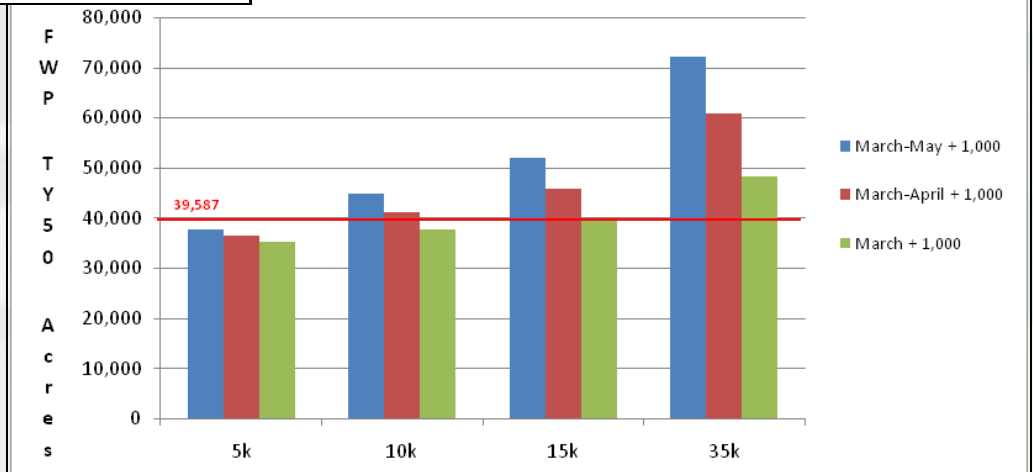
The White Ditch Project Area



The White Ditch Project

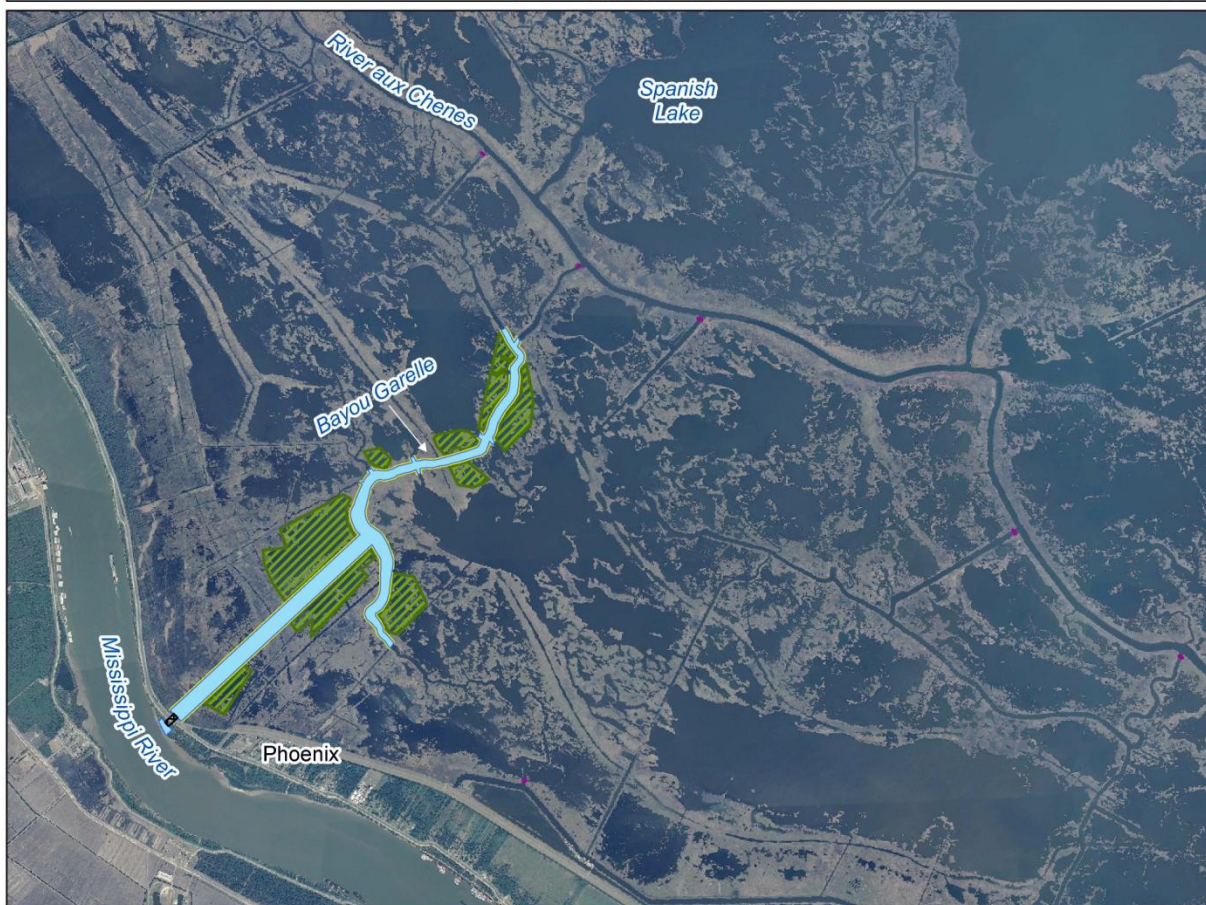


FWP Acres at TY50 (2065) per Operational Plan
39,587 acres needed to achieve no net loss





LOUISIANA COASTAL AREA:
MEDIUM DIVERSION AT WHITE DITCH
ALTERNATIVE 4 - LOCATION 3



LCA WHITE DITCH

Legend

-  Box Culvert
-  Channel Modifications/Dredging
-  Ridge Creation/Restoration
-  Marsh Creation/Restoration
-  Flow Constrictor

LOCATION MAP



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3/16/2010



Lessons Learned

How did we go from essentially nothing to a tentatively selected plan for one of the largest diversions ever approved for ecosystem restoration purposes in just 12 months?



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- **Unwavering Dedication!!**



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- **Constant Communication!**
- **Unwavering Dedication!!**
- **Diverse and Talented PDT!!!**



Constant Communication

- **Project Delivery Team**
- **Vertical Team**
- **Non Government Organizations**
- **Local Landowners**
- **Academic and Agency Experts**
- **Public**



Unwavering Dedication

- **Funding was never an issue**
- **The end goal was always clear**
- **Everyone knew why the task was important**
- **MVN Senior Leaders were steadfast in their commitment and support for the PDTs**



Diverse and Talented PDT

- **Regionalized PDT brought diversified viewpoints and strategies**
- **Intelligent and willing to seek best solution**
- **Bold and willing to defend their work**
- **Willing to consider all opinions**
- **Personally committed**
- **Nights, Weekends, and Holidays – we asked and they repeatedly gave**



Unfortunate Realities

Cheap, Fast, or Detailed?

What is the Priority?

Which is the Most Important?

Pick One....



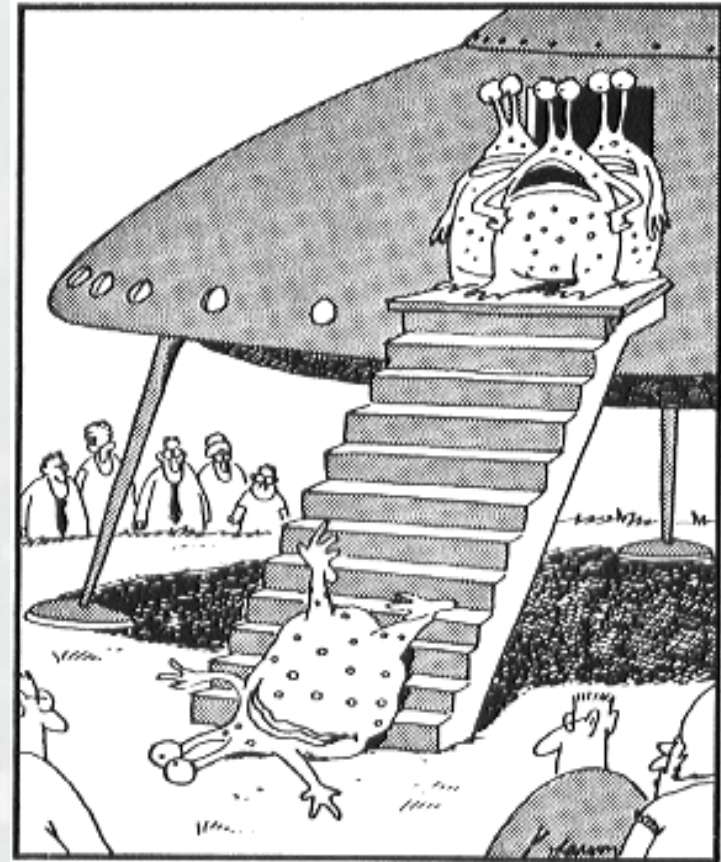
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Cheap, **Fast**, or Detailed?



Unfortunate Realities

- Their will be technical difficulties
- Even good people make mistakes under pressure
- A ball **WILL** get dropped and it will take a lot of people to clean up the mess
- Process related bottlenecks are unavoidable



"Wonderful! Just wonderful! ... So much for instilling them with a sense of awe."



Unfortunate Realities

- **Pace is relentless**
 - ▶ Managed chaos
 - ▶ Meat grinder
- **Stress is constant**
 - ▶ No time to celebrate small success or mentally rest
 - ▶ Schedule greatly magnifies all problems
- **Burn-out is inevitable**
 - ▶ People and behaviors change
 - ▶ Overburdened and weary PDT become less efficient



Take Home Message

A 23 month Feasibility Study is possible if.....

- **Funding is not an issue**
- **Requirement for new data is minimal**
- **There is complete buy-in by agencies**
- **The Vertical Team is engaged from very beginning and at all critical points**
- **There is constant communication internally and externally**
- **There is political will to push past obstacles**
- **There is a talented and dedicated PDT**
- **There are two study managers**



Questions?



Ensign Johnson suddenly comes to the alarming realization that he is the only red-shirt in the landing party.

