

SECURING OUR FUTURES: A LEGACY OF SUPPORT FOR COASTAL RESTORATION

RESTORE THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER DELTA
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Environmental
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RESTORE
THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER DELTA

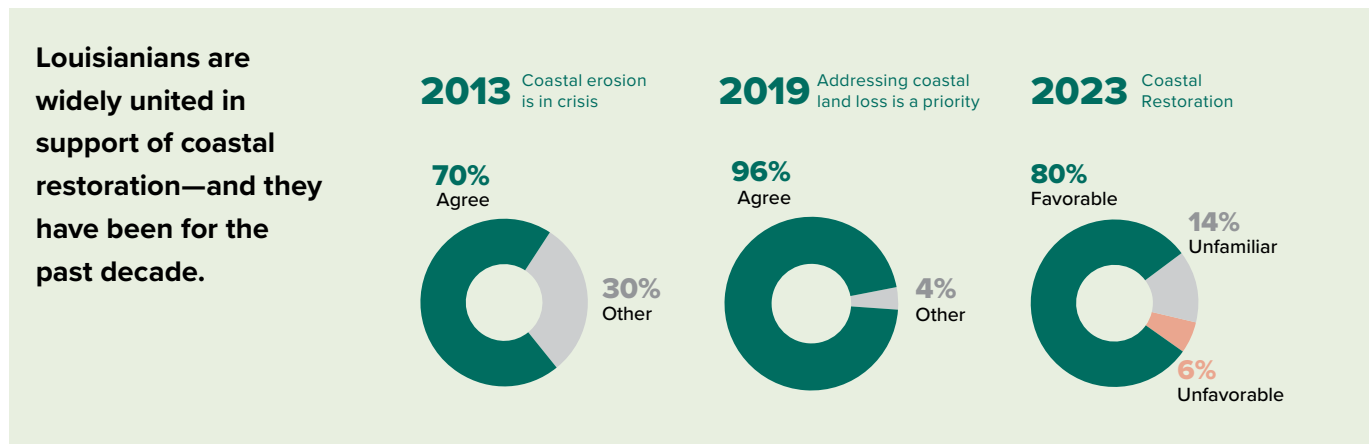
Photo credit: CPRA

Restore the Mississippi River Delta (MRD) is a coalition of local and national environmental organizations working within Louisiana to rebuild and restore the coast. The coalition has been conducting public opinion research among likely Louisiana voters by independent polling firms since 2013 and media research by Hattaway Communications since 2016. All has pertained to coastal issues and coastal restoration. Our work is made possible through the Walton Family Foundation and other funders.



Louisianians are proud of their unique cultures and communities—and they're committed to preserving their way of life for future generations in the face of changing weather and climate conditions. From northern Louisiana to the coast, across communities and demographic divides, statewide surveys and media coverage over the past decade show widespread support for coastal restoration efforts that protect the ecosystem as well as the jobs, safety and well-being of Louisianians.

LOUISIANIANS SUPPORT COASTAL RESTORATION



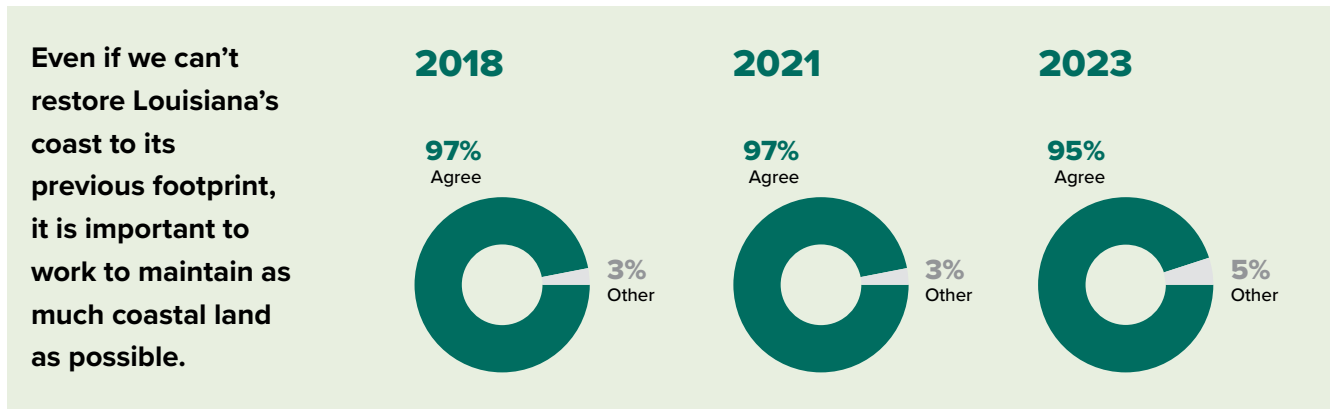
Louisianians feel an immense sense of urgency around coastal restoration and land loss. They are concerned that coastal land loss will directly impact them, their families and Louisiana in the next 10 years—if they have not been impacted already. In 2023, half (54%) of registered voters statewide said they thought that coastal land loss would directly impact them and their families in the next 10 years.

While coastal restoration projects are popular, the critical guiding strategy behind these efforts is the less well-known Louisiana Coastal Master Plan. The plan, a model for coastal restoration and protection across the nation, is built on the latest data and emerging local needs, and it deserves credit for placing Louisiana at the forefront of climate innovation.

LOUISIANIANS SUPPORT ACTION

Louisianians feel that coastal restoration action is important to maintaining as much of the coast as possible, even if it will never return to its original footprint. They understand they can't make it perfect, but it's important to make it better.

Nearly all 2023 registered voters agreed with this sentiment, and their feelings have remained strong for years.



The media research showed that the media coverage has continued to have positive conversations about rebuilding the Louisiana coast. For example, from September 2021 to August 2022, 10% of articles included themes relating to rebuilding the coast, such as “Louisiana is committed to rebuilding land.” Media research also found that media coverage highlighted the progress that is being made by the Coastal Master Plan. For example, the article *West Grand Terre Restoration Project Wraps Up*¹ discussed the \$100 million West Grand Terre Beach Nourishment and Stabilization project.

The project restored 251 acres of beach and dune and 147 acres of back-barrier marsh on the island. The article underscored that the completion of this project showcased Louisiana's progress in rebuilding land and highlighted the state's commitment to providing greater protection and resilience to the coastal communities and ecosystems in the region.

Residents understand how important coastal restoration is to the state and are willing to support most actions that push forward coastal protection:

- **Supporting the Coastal Master Plan:** Residents were eager to learn that Louisiana had a plan, such as the Coastal Master Plan, that was backed by science. More than 9 in 10 (92%) of 2023 registered voters agreed that it's important for Louisiana to have a plan to deal with coastal land loss that keeps up with the latest science.
- **Supporting Sediment Diversions:** Louisianians were very supportive of sediment diversions. Three-fourths (73%) of 2023 registered voters said they supported sediment diversions once they learned that the diversions build and maintain coastal wetlands over time.
- **Supporting Public Officials:** Louisianians wanted their lawmakers to support coastal restoration action. More than four in five (84%) 2023 registered voters and 2021 coastal voters, respectively, said they felt favorably toward lawmakers who support strong action to protect and restore Louisiana coastal areas and wetlands.
- **Supporting Funding:** Residents wanted more funding secured for coastal restoration, and some were even willing to pay more for increased funding. Nearly all (97%) 2019 voters thought that committed funds should be protected and that more funds should be identified to address the problem. Almost two-thirds (63%) would support paying a state tax if they knew funds from that tax would go directly to funding coastal restoration and protection across Louisiana.

¹E. Ganic (July 27, 2022), [West Grand Terre Restoration Project Wraps Up](#).