

To All Laffite's Cove Property Owners:

If you own one or more lots in Laffite's Cove, you are a member of the Laffite's Cove Nature Society ("LCNS"). LCNS is a special purpose nonprofit corporation that was created when Laffite's Cove was developed, as a result of the environmental damage and loss of habitat caused by the development. The history of the Laffite's Cove area is fascinating, and you can learn more at <http://www.laffitescovenaturesociety.org>.

As President of LCNS, I am writing to update you on our current Marsh Grass Project. Under the Laffite's Cove deed restrictions, each canal front homeowner is required to maintain marsh grass extending fifteen feet out from the bulkhead. To avoid damage to the marsh grass, no construction of any type is permitted within twenty feet of the bulkhead other than one pier between four and six feet in width, leading to the boat dock. These requirements are set out in the Army Corps of Engineers Permit that was issued for construction of the canals in the subdivision, and that is now part of our deed restrictions. If the homeowner fails to maintain the fifteen foot marsh grass fringe, LCNS has the right to enter the lot, perform any necessary work to restore the marsh grass shelf, charge the cost to the homeowner, and impose a lien on the lot if those amounts are not paid.

A few LCNS Board members met recently with the Corps of Engineers to discuss the state of the marsh grass and our plan to restore it to the levels required by the permit in our deed restrictions. After hearing our plan, the Corps was pleased and indicated its wholehearted support.

Marsh grass grows only in the intertidal zone, and cannot survive if it spends too much time completely under water, or completely dry. Therefore, the elevation of the area where it is planted is critical. In many areas of the Laffite's Cove canals, the original fifteen foot marsh grass planting areas have subsided due to the angle of the dredged slope, wave action, owner neglect and other factors and are now unsuitable for marsh grass survival. One of our scientific board members, Phil Glass, has a wealth of experience in this area and has recommended that a concrete bag wall be constructed fifteen feet from the bulkhead on each canal lot, with sand fill placed behind the wall to create a proper elevation for the marsh grass planting. LCNS is in the process of seeking formal Corps of Engineers approval for this plan, but the representatives with whom we met (which included the Chief of Enforcement) were pleased with the plan.

We are now in the process of determining the least expensive and least intrusive way to implement this plan, and will provide updates on cost estimates and timelines as available. One of our board members, Gary Poltorak, has created a successful model of the plan on his lot. I have included a photograph of Gary's pilot project to give you an idea of what a restored marsh shelf will look like before it is planted.

The LCNS Board is also continuing its efforts to remove any jet ski lifts or other appendages located in the twenty foot "no build zone" that do not comply with the permit. The purpose of the "no build" zone and the five foot side setbacks are to ensure that the marsh grass isn't damaged, and that everyone has room to navigate. We don't want anyone's jet skis to end up trapped by a concrete bag retaining wall!

Please let us know if you have any questions. Contact Gary Poltorak at 409-632-0121 to meet with him at his home if you want to see the pilot project along his bulkhead and have him answer any questions you may have about the project. The LCNS Board meets every other month at the Galveston Country Club, and our meeting notices are posted well in advance on our website.

Sincerely,

Chris Cahill