



# St. Bernard Parish Government

## 2016-2023 Coastal Report

### Parish President Guy McInnis



December 2023



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Kemp's ridley sea turtle hatchlings were recently observed on the Chandeleur Islands for the first time in 75 years (Photo: State of Louisiana)



## Executive Summary



St. Bernard Parish Government (SBPG) is committed to leveraging local funding to restore coastal St. Bernard Parish and sustain the community's cultural, environmental, and economic resources for future generations. Recent efforts were predicated on the development and implementation of SBPG's first comprehensive local coastal master plan. The Coastal Strategy Document (2016, 2018, and 2022) is the product of an ongoing collaborative effort between the Administration, St. Bernard Parish Council, Coastal Zone Advisory Committee (CZAC), and many other stakeholders.

The Coastal Strategy Document is organized according to four strategic areas of focus:

- Largescale Coastal Restoration and Flood Risk Reduction;
- Small-scale Projects, Sustainable Fisheries, and Economic Development;
- Local Coastal Programming and Community Engagement; and
- Advocacy.

SBPG has made significant progress across all four areas. The Parish has also developed and maintained partnerships that will help sustain this progress into the future. Planning, designing, and constructing coastal restoration projects takes considerable time and resources. However, the previous eight years have demonstrated SBPG's ability to effectively leverage local resources, attract external funding, and build and maintain positive momentum.

The Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) has routinely acknowledged and rewarded SBPG's efforts, and the agency now views the SBPG Coastal Division as Louisiana's model local coastal program. The citizens of St. Bernard Parish have also been given unprecedented access to information regarding the coastal program at <https://www.sbpgh.net/354/Coastal-Division-Documents>. Maintaining a leadership role in coastal Louisiana will be critical to the Parish's continued success.

The purpose of the 2016-2023 Coastal Report is to provide a comprehensive summary of the progress that has been made over the past eight years and to frame some of the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. The report has been organized according to the four strategic areas of focus outlined above. Additionally, the 2016-2023 Coastal Report includes an updated version of the Master Project List. Finally, the report includes a message from outgoing parish president Guy McInnis.

## I. 2016-2023: Recap and Highlights

Restoring coastal St. Bernard Parish is critical to protecting life and property and maintaining ecological and economic functionality throughout the region. To achieve these goals, SBPG has taken a multifaceted approach that considers the full scope of St. Bernard Parish's current needs and future aspirations. For the past eight years, the Parish has been focused on implementing a wide range of projects that are intended to promote ecosystem protection and restoration as a means of managing flood risk,



sustaining local culture, and supporting the parish's critical economic role on Louisiana's working coast.

SBPG has pursued coastal projects and funding opportunities at various scales. Some projects have been incredibly ambitious, such as the Lake Borgne Marsh Creation project (the largest marsh creation project in state history) and the Eastbank Sediment Pipeline, a groundbreaking project that will provide a renewable source of sediment for the entire Breton Basin. Smaller projects include economic development efforts like the Paris Road Corridor Streetscape Enhancement project and local restoration projects such as Bayou Terre aux Boeufs Ridge Restoration. Effective intergovernmental coordination and community outreach and engagement have also been focal points, as evidenced by the broad coalition of advocates and financial supporters that SBPG has amassed over the past eight years.

### A. Largescale Coastal Restoration and Flood Risk Reduction

Funding for largescale coastal restoration and flood risk reduction projects has historically been limited to a narrow set of Federal programs such as the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA). However, the Deepwater Horizon event (BP Oil Spill) and the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA) have provided St. Bernard Parish and other communities with many new funding opportunities. Over the past eight years, SBPG has redoubled its efforts to secure annual CWPPRA funding (see Appendix A) while also pursuing new funding opportunities through the RESTORE Act and other programs (see Appendix B). These efforts have yielded a suite of funded largescale coastal restoration and flood risk reduction projects in St. Bernard Parish. Many projects have either been constructed or are under construction, while others are currently in the engineering/design or planning phase.

#### Largescale Coastal Restoration and Flood Risk Reduction Projects (2016-2023)

Project	Phase	Cost	Funding Source
Lake Lery Marsh Creation (Phase 1)	Complete	\$8,000,000	CIAP
Biloxi Marsh Living Shoreline (Phase 1 and 2)	Complete	\$84,100,000	CPRA/NRDA
Violet Canal North Levee Alignment	Complete	\$4,000,000	CPRA/CDBG/HMGP
Bayou Terre aux Boeufs Ridge (Phase 1)	Complete	\$2,000,000	SBPG/CPRA
North Breton Island Restoration	Complete	\$72,000,000	NRDA/DOI
Golden Triangle Marsh Creation	Complete	\$54,300,000	CPRA/NRDA
Lake Lery Marsh Creation (Phase 2)	Ongoing	\$3,000,000	CIAP/RESTORE/CPRA
Bayou Terre Aux Boeufs Ridge (Phase 2 and 3)	Ongoing	\$5,200,000	SBPG/NFWF/RESTORE/CPRA
St. Bernard Pump Station Repairs	Ongoing	\$4,000,000	CPRA



Lake Borgne Marsh Creation (Phase 1)	Ongoing	\$114,600,000	CPRA/NRDA
East Delacroix Marsh Creation	Ongoing	\$37,800,000	CWPPRA/CPRA
Lake Lery Marsh Creation (Phase 3)	Eng/Design	\$14,800,000	SBPG/TBD
East Bank Sediment Pipeline	Eng/Design	\$61,500,000	SBPG/CPRA/TBD
Bayou La Loutre Ridge Restoration	Eng/Design	\$33,500,000	CWPPRA/CPRA/NRDA
North Delacroix Marsh Creation	Eng/Design	\$35,500,000	CWPPRA/CPRA
Black Bay and Bay Eloi Barrier Island Creation	Eng/Design	\$3,550,000	SBPG
Reggio Marsh Creation	Eng/Design	\$33,600,000	CWPPRA/CPRA
Yscloskey Marsh Creation	Eng/Design	\$44,100,000	CWPPRA/CPRA
Chandeleur Islands Restoration	Eng/Design	\$8,000,000	CPRA/NRDA
Hopedale Marsh Creation	Planning	\$82,300,000	TBD
Oak River to Delacroix Marsh Landbridge	Planning	\$114,200,000	TBD
Chandeleur Sound Islands Restoration	Planning	\$57,000,000	TBD

**TOTAL: \$877,050,000**

## B. Small-scale Projects, Sustainable Fisheries, and Economic Development

SBPG recognizes the economic and cultural significance of St. Bernard Parish's natural environment and has been committed to sustaining and promoting tourism, commercial and recreational fisheries, and workforce development in the parish. The Parish has been actively engaged with public sector, private sector, nonprofit sector, and higher education partners over the past eight years for the purpose of developing and implementing small-scale restoration projects and other efforts focused on fisheries and economic development. Such projects include the Delacroix Fishing Complex, the Nunez Workforce Development Program, and multiple oyster habitat restoration efforts.

Partnerships include (but are not limited to):

- CPRA;
- Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF);
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF);
- US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE);
- Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority—East;
- LSU Ag Center and Louisiana Sea Grant;
- Nunez Community College;
- Nicholls State University;
- Meraux Foundation;
- Delacroix Corporation;
- Biloxi Marsh Lands Corporation;
- Robin Seafood;



- Ducks Unlimited;
- Orvis;
- American Fly-Fishing Trade Association;
- Anglers Bettering Louisiana's Estuaries;
- St. Bernard Wetlands Foundation;
- Pontchartrain Conservancy;
- Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana;
- MRGO Must Go Coalition; and
- Pontchartrain Conservancy.

#### Small-scale Projects, Sustainable Fisheries, and Economic Development (2016-2023)

Project	Phase	Cost	Funding Source
Violet Harbor of Refuge	Complete	\$2,000,000	CDBG
Delacroix Fishing Complex	Complete	\$2,000,000	SBPG
Lake Fortuna Oyster Cutch	Complete	\$2,500,000	LDWF/NRDA
Violet Canal Maintenance Dredging	Complete	\$280,000	CPRA
Violet Canal Siphon Repairs	Complete	\$1,000,000	CPRA
Improving Oyster Resilience Program	Complete	\$7,000,000	NRDA/LDWF
Ducks Unlimited Restoration Project (Phase 1)	Complete	\$1,100,000	NAWCA/DU/MF/SBPG
Nunez Fisheries Workforce Devt.	Complete	\$520,000	RESTORE
Paris Road Streetscape	Complete	\$1,850,000	RESTORE
Ducks Unlimited Restoration Project (Phase 2)	Eng/Design	\$3,000,000	NAWCA/DU/MF/SBPG
Recreational Fishing Pier (Shell Beach)	Planning	\$1,374,000	SBPG/RESTORE
Rec. Fishing Pier/Market (Hopedale)	Planning	\$1,000,000	SBPG/RESTORE

<b>TOTAL</b>	:	<b>\$23,624,000</b>
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#### C. Local Coastal Programming and Community Engagement

SBPG has developed and implemented a wide array of local coastal programming and community engagement activities over the past eight years. Such programming has included Bayou Bash marine debris removal events, Cookoff for the Coast, and several annual volunteer plantings. Most notably, SBPG has partnered with several public, private, and nonprofit entities to develop, fund, and implement the Parish's black mangrove planting program since 2017. Students from Chalmette High and Nunez have been heavily engaged in this program, creating many opportunities for local youth to experience coastal St. Bernard Parish firsthand.

#### Local Coastal Programming and Community Engagement (2016-2023)

Project	Phase	Cost	Funding Source
Oyster Reef Shoreline Protection	Complete	\$600,000	CRCL/CPRA/NFWF



MRGO and Kayak Navigational Aids	Complete	\$20,000	SBPG
Black Mangrove and Cypress Plantings	Complete	\$25,000	SBPG/Orvis/AFFTA/Private/LPBF
Marine Debris Removal and Dredging	Complete	\$320,000	SBPG
Islenos Community Archive at Nunez	Complete	\$100,000	RESTORE

<b>TOTAL</b>	:	<b>\$1,065,000</b>
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## D. Advocacy

There has never been a greater need for advocacy in coastal St. Bernard Parish. The parish is subject to the ongoing threats of coastal land loss, tropical weather events, and flooding. Additionally, chronic (Mardi Gras Pass and Caernarvon) and acute (Bonnet Carre' Spillway) influxes of freshwater into St. Bernard Parish waterways continue to threaten commercial and recreational fisheries and the local economy. Finally, in terms of coastal protection and restoration, it is critical that local stakeholders ensure that Federal and State resources are being leveraged in a manner that maximizes environmental and flood risk reduction benefits for St. Bernard Parish.

Governor John Bel Edwards appointed parish president Guy McInnis to the CPRA Board in early 2016. His appointment was the first for a St. Bernard Parish official since the inception of CPRA. President McInnis also re-established a fully-staffed SBPG Coastal Division, which consists of an executive director of coastal operations and two coastal advisors. Expanding the traditional coastal zone management administrator role and including support staff have allowed SBPG to conduct day-to-day coastal operations while also aggressively pursuing Federal and State funding opportunities and ensuring that St. Bernard Parish has representation at every relevant meeting around the state.

President McInnis and/or SBPG Coastal Division personnel have regularly staffed the following meetings over the past eight years:

- CPRA Board;
- Governor's Coastal Advisory Commission;
- LDWF Commission;
- LDWF Oyster Task Force;
- LDWF Shrimp Task Force;
- LDWF Crab Task Force;
- LDWF Finfish Task Force;
- CWPPRA Task Force;
- CWPPRA Technical Committee;
- Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) Annual Meeting;



- NRDA Louisiana Trustee Implementation Group Annual Meeting; and
- Caernarvon Interagency Advisory Committee.

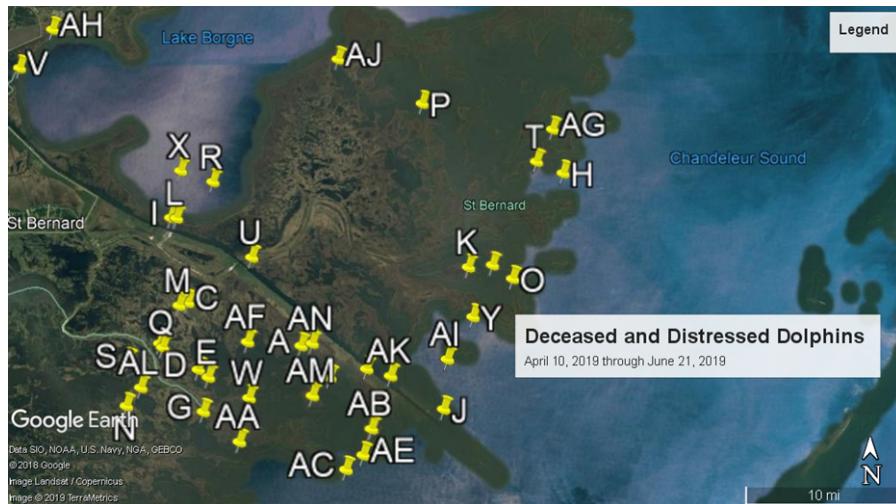
SBPG also recently hosted two CPRA Board meetings in St. Bernard Parish.

CPRA Board meeting in Chalmette (2022)



The Administration, St. Bernard Parish Council, and SBPG Coastal Division also played a leadership role during several crises that occurred over the past eight years, including the Gulf of Mexico Freshwater Flooding (2019) Federal Fishery Disaster and associated marine mammal unusual mortality event. Parish officials were the first to observe and document dolphin strandings in St. Bernard Parish waterways, and ultimately reported thirty-eight (38) deceased or distressed dolphins to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). This initial report triggered a regional investigation that resulted in the discovery of 337 dolphin strandings between Louisiana and Florida. NOAA declared this phenomenon an unusual mortality event and identified the cause as "exposure to low salinity waters resulting from extreme freshwater discharge from watersheds" (<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-life-distress/2019-bottlenose-dolphin-unusual-mortality-event-along-northern-gulf>).

Deceased and Distressed Dolphins Reported in St. Bernard Parish and Vicinity, April 10, 2019 through June 21, 2019



NOAA attributed the extreme freshwater discharge to record precipitation throughout the Mississippi River basin and the unprecedented two Bonnet Carre' Spillway openings that occurred in 2019. President McInnis and the St. Bernard Parish Council formally declared an emergency in St. Bernard Parish because of the adverse impacts of the freshwater, and Governor John Bel Edwards subsequently requested that the US Secretary of Commerce declare a Federal Fishery Disaster in Louisiana. The declaration was made in October 2019 and US Congress approved \$88 million in funding for the region. Shortly thereafter, SBPG became the only local entity to submit a formal fishery disaster recovery plan to the State of Louisiana. Many of the Parish's suggestions were incorporated into LDWF's recovery plan and are currently being implemented.

## II. Closing Remarks from Parish President Guy McInnis



Dear Coastal Stakeholders:

Serving the residents of St. Bernard Parish has been an honor and a privilege. My Administration made a commitment to protecting and restoring our parish's coast, natural resources, and local economy. We have since worked closely with the St. Bernard Parish Council, residents of St. Bernard Parish, and many other stakeholders to ensure that St. Bernard Parish Government (SBPG) would be in the best position to live up to that commitment now and in the future.

My Administration's vision for protecting and restoring coastal St. Bernard Parish has been based on two fundamental approaches: 1) improving SBPG's relationship with critical stakeholders like CPRA and the USACE; and 2) leveraging local resources to attract Federal and State funding for large-scale coastal restoration projects in St. Bernard Parish. As indicated throughout this report, the Parish has made significant progress with our intergovernmental relationships. Perhaps more importantly, each year the Council and Administration have made substantial resources available to the SBPG Coastal Division. These resources have been leveraged to attract:



- Nearly \$1 billion in ongoing and planned Federal and State investments in coastal restoration projects;
- Five funded CWPPRA projects (valued at over \$184 million) that will restore over 1,500 acres of damaged or destroyed wetlands;
- Over \$22 million in Federal and State grants to implement local projects; and
- An additional \$20 million in pending Federal and State grant awards.

I would like to thank the Council, residents of St. Bernard Parish, and other stakeholders for believing in my Administration's vision and helping us bring it to fruition. I would also like to thank our Federal, State, private, and nonprofit partners for their support and expertise. Finally, I would like to thank the SBPG Coastal Division and other Parish staff for working diligently to protect and restore coastal St. Bernard Parish.

Sincerely,

Guy McInnis  
Parish President  
St. Bernard Parish Government

### III. Master Project List



Project	Phase	Cost	Funding Source
Lake Lery Marsh Creation (Phase 1)	Complete	\$8,000,000	CIAP
Oyster Reef Shoreline Protection	Complete	\$600,000	CRCL/CPRA/NFWF
MRGO and Kayak Navigational Aids	Complete	\$20,000	SBPG
Biloxi Marsh Living Shoreline (Phase 1 and 2)	Complete	\$84,100,000	CPRA/NRDA
Violet Canal North Levee Alignment	Complete	\$4,000,000	CPRA/CDBG/HMGP
Black Mangrove and Cypress Plantings	Complete	\$25,000	SBPG/Orvis/AFFTA/Private/LPBF
Violet Harbor of Refuge	Complete	\$2,000,000	CDBG
Delacroix Fishing Complex	Complete	\$2,000,000	SBPG
Lake Fortuna Oyster Cultch	Complete	\$2,500,000	LDWF/NRDA
Violet Canal Maintenance Dredging	Complete	\$280,000	CPRA
Marine Debris Removal and Dredging	Complete	\$320,000	SBPG
Bayou Terre aux Boeufs Ridge (Phase 1)	Complete	\$2,000,000	SBPG/CPRA
North Breton Island Restoration	Complete	\$72,000,000	NRDA/DOI
Violet Canal Siphon Repairs	Complete	\$1,000,000	CPRA
Improving Oyster Resilience Program	Complete	\$7,000,000	NRDA/LDWF
Ducks Unlimited Restoration Project (Phase 1)	Complete	\$1,100,000	NAWCA/DU/MF/SBPG
Golden Triangle Marsh Creation	Complete	\$54,300,000	CPRA/NRDA
Nunez Fisheries Workforce Devt.	Complete	\$520,000	RESTORE
Islenos Community Archive at Nunez	Complete	\$100,000	RESTORE
Paris Road Streetscape	Complete	\$1,850,000	RESTORE
Lake Lery Marsh Creation (Phase 2)	Ongoing	\$3,000,000	CIAP/RESTORE/CPRA
Bayou Terre Aux Boeufs Ridge (Phase 2 and 3)	Ongoing	\$5,200,000	SBPG/NFWF/RESTORE/CPRA
St. Bernard Pump Station Repairs	Ongoing	\$4,000,000	CPRA
Lake Borgne Marsh Creation (Phase 1)	Ongoing	\$114,600,000	CPRA/NRDA
East Delacroix Marsh Creation	Ongoing	\$37,800,000	CWPPRA/CPRA
Lake Lery Marsh Creation (Phase 3)	Eng/Design	\$14,800,000	SBPG/TBD
East Bank Sediment Pipe. Prelim. Design	Eng/Design	\$61,500,000	SBPG/CPRA/TBD
Bayou La Loutre Ridge Restoration	Eng/Design	\$33,500,000	CWPPRA/CPRA/NRDA
North Delacroix Marsh Creation	Eng/Design	\$35,500,000	CWPPRA/CPRA
Black Bay and Bay Eloi Barrier Island Creation	Eng/Design	\$3,550,000	SBPG
Reggio Marsh Creation	Eng/Design	\$33,600,000	CWPPRA/CPRA
Yscloskey Marsh Creation	Eng/Design	\$44,100,000	CWPPRA/CPRA
Ducks Unlimited Restoration Project (Phase 2)	Eng/Design	\$3,000,000	NAWCA/DU/MF/SBPG
Chandeleur Islands Restoration	Eng/Design	\$8,000,000	CPRA/NRDA
Recreational Fishing Pier (Shell Beach)	Planning	\$1,374,000	SBPG/RESTORE
Rec. Fishing Pier/Market (Hopedale)	Planning	\$1,000,000	SBPG/RESTORE
Hopedale Marsh Creation	Planning	\$82,300,000	TBD
Oak River to Delacroix Marsh Landbridge	Planning	\$114,200,000	TBD
Chandeleur Sound Islands Restoration	Planning	\$57,000,000	TBD

**GRAND TOTAL: \$ 901,739,000**  
**SBPG Coastal Division**



**Chief Administrative Officer**  
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The end of Delacroix Highway at Bayou Terre aux Boeufs



**Appendix A:**  
**CWPPRA Activities (2016-2023)**



## Approved Phase 1 and Phase 2 Funding

Project	Year	Phase	Total Budget
Bayou La Loutre Ridge Restoration	2016	E/D (Phase 1)	\$33,500,000
East Delacroix Marsh Creation	2018	E/D (Phase 1)	\$37,800,000
North Delacroix Marsh Creation	2019	E/D (Phase 1)	\$35,500,000
Reggio Marsh Creation	2020	E/D (Phase 1)	\$33,600,000
East Delacroix Marsh Creation	2022	Construction (Ph. 2)	NA
Yscloskey Marsh Creation	2022	E/D (Phase 1)	\$44,100,000
Bayou La Loutre Ridge Restoration	2022	Construction (NRDA)	NA
<b>TOTAL:</b>			<b>\$184,500,000</b>

## Pending Phase 1 and Phase 2 Funding

Project	Year	Phase	Total Budget
Reggio Marsh Creation	2023	Construction (Ph. 2)	NA
Bayou Terre aux Boeufs Ridge Restoration	2023	E/D (Phase 1)	\$30,000,000
Bayou Ducros Marsh Creation	2023	E/D (Phase 1)	\$20,000,000
Biloxi Marsh Shoreline Protection	2023	E/D (Phase 1)	\$20,000,000
<b>TOTAL:</b>			<b>\$70,000,000</b>

**\$254,500,00**  
**GRAND TOTAL:** 0  
 (Funded or In Progress)

## Appendix B: External Funding Awards Secured and Pending (2016-2023)



## External Funding Awards Secured (2016-2023)

Source	Project	Year	Total Budget
Orvis (Private)	Black Mangrove Program	2017	\$10,000
Biloxi Marsh Lands Corp.	Black Mangrove Program	2017	\$7,000
American Fly-Fishing Trade Assn.	Black Mangrove Program	2017	\$8,000
RESTORE Direct Component	Nunez Workforce Development	2018	\$520,000
RESTORE Direct Component	Paris Road Streetscape Enhancement	2018	\$1,850,000
CPRA State Surplus	Eastbank Sediment Pipeline	2018	\$500,000
LDWF	Lake Fortuna Oyster Cultch	2018	\$2,500,000
CPRA RESTORE State Matching	Lake Lery Marsh Creation (Ph. 2)	2019	\$2,700,000
CPRA State Surplus	Pump Station Repairs	2019	\$4,000,000
RESTORE Direct Component	Lake Lery Marsh Creation (Ph. 2)	2020	\$300,000
CPRA State Surplus	Bayou Terre aux Boeufs Ridge (Ph. 1)	2020	\$2,000,000
NFWF Coastal Resilience	Bayou Terre aux Boeufs Ridge (Ph. 2 & 3)	2020	\$2,600,000
CPRA State Surplus	Eastbank Sediment Pipeline	2022	\$1,000,000
RESTORE Direct Component	Bayou Terre aux Boeufs Ridge (Ph. 2 & 3)	2022	\$1,300,000
CPRA State Surplus	Bayou Terre aux Boeufs Ridge (Ph. 2 & 3)	2022	\$1,300,000
RESTORE Direct Component	Islenos Community Archive	2022	\$100,000
LDWF 2019 Fishery Disaster	MRGO Rock Dam Study	2023	\$1,600,000
<b>TOTAL</b>			
L:			<b>\$22,270,000</b>

## External Funding Awards Pending (2016-2023)

Source	Project	Year	Total Budget
FEMA BRIC	Lake Lery Marsh Creation (Ph. 3)	2023	\$20,000,000
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$20,000,000</b>

**\$42,270,00**

**GRAND TOTAL:** 0  
(Funded or In Progress)