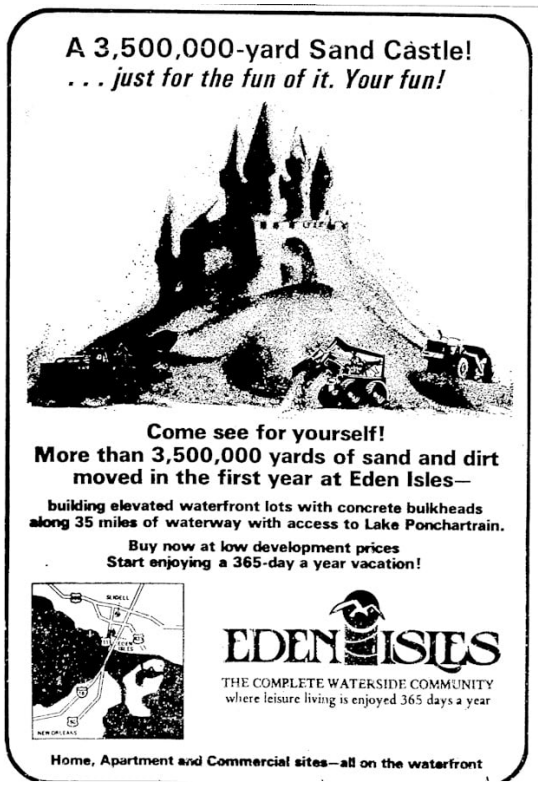
Eden Isles Archives

A History of Eden Isles

By Thomas Thompson
(Dec, 2022)

The Eden Isles Development Began in 1969 when Leisure Inc., a Monroe-based company obtained 5,300 acres of marsh south of Slidell, called Grand Lagoon, and began development of Eden Isles.



Eden Isles Reports on First Sales

Developers of the planned Eden Isles resort near Slidell report that 16 lots representing a sales volume of $130,000, were sold on the first weekend the development was announced.

James W. Beaver, vice-president of Leisure, Inc., the developer, said sites vary in size with the typical lot measuring 65 by 140 feet. Pre-development prices start at $6,500.

After development begins lots will be priced from $9,600, said Beaver.

Eden Isles will have 12,000 mostly waterfront residential lots. The developer plans an 18-hole golf course, clubhouse, marina, pools, yacht harbor and other facilities in the 5,300-acre tract between I-10 and Hwy. 11 on the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain.

Sanitary sewer and central water systems will be provided to all lots.

The development will be a planned community with certain building restrictions, offering construction and commercial developments.

PICAYUNE.) - March 8, 1970

Leisure Inc. dredged the marsh to create deep-water canals and used the dredged material to construct home sites and streets with subsurface drainage, waterways, bridges, concrete bulkheads, a water tower and sewer treatment plant.

Leisure Inc. then built the Eden Isles golf course, marina with concrete floating docks, and clubhouse. They provided a security guard at the entrance of Eden Isles and maintained the common grounds, all at no charge to the residents. Their sales office was located on Hwy.11, and the salesmen took people on tours through the waterways on a large motor yacht. A large observation tower was constructed on Windward Passage for people to see the undeveloped areas and pick out their lots.

The Eden Isles clubhouse was a two story Polynesian style building located at the end of Pebble Beach Drive and over looked a beautiful 18-hole golf course. The clubhouse complex contained a lounge, restaurant, sandwich shop, pro-shop, tennis courts, swimming pool, and boat dock. The Eden Isles clubhouse was the focal point of community events where homeowner meetings were held and where neighbors socialized with each other.

Eden Isles residents were living in paradise with paved streets, subsurface drainage, community sewer and water, security guards, manicured common grounds, golf course, clubhouse, tennis courts, and swimming pool; in addition to waterways leading directly into Lake Pontchartrain.

Eden Isles was the premiere subdivision in St. Tammany Parish and flourished until the mid seventies when Save Our Wetlands Inc. filed suit against Leisure Inc., St. Tammany Parish, and the Corps of Engineers to halt the Eden Isles project. The long costly legal battle dragged on for years and stymied the development's growth. In 1977, Leisure Inc. defaulted on its loan and was taken over by Eden Isles Inc., a company controlled by the Security Pacific National Bank of Los Angles. As a result of the bankruptcy, the development of Eden Isles came to a standstill. It was later speculated that the development failed because it was too ambitious for the market with unrealistic sales projections and poor access (Hwy. 11 only).

In 1979, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against Save Our Wetlands Inc. and the bank tried to keep the development viable until a new developer could be found to take it over. In 1987 Landmark Land Co. agreed to buy Eden Isles Inc. for $14 million contingent upon the construction of an I-10 interchange at Eden Isles.

Security Pacific National Bank and Landmark Land Co. lobbied local, state, and federal officials to relocate the proposed Fremaux Road I-10 interchange to Eden Isles. When the residents of Eden Isles discovered that Landmark proposed a direct flow of traffic from the I-10 interchange into Eden Isle Drive, the Eden Isles Homeowners' Association strongly objected to the plan.

Fearing the I-10 interchange would be built at Fremaux instead of Eden Isles, Landmark held several meetings with the Eden Isles Homeowners' Association in order to get the interchange they desperately needed for their development. Landmark promised their Planned Unit Development (PUD) would enhance and improve Eden Isles, and agreed to make the following concessions to the Eden Isles residents in exchange for dropping objections to the I-10 interchange:

1. I-10 would flow directly into Oak Harbor Drive, instead of Eden Isles Drive.
2. Oak Harbor Boulevard would be four lanes, and 35 miles per from I-10 to Hwy 11.
3. No homes would be built adjacent to Oak Harbor Blvd that would impede traffic flow.

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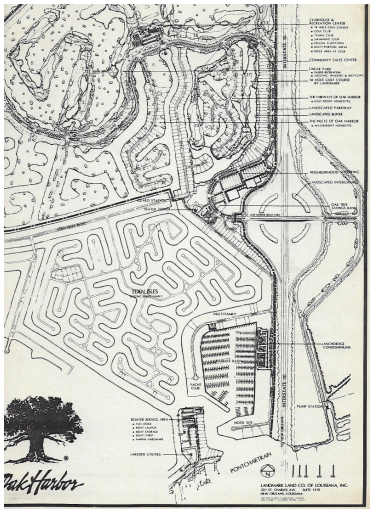
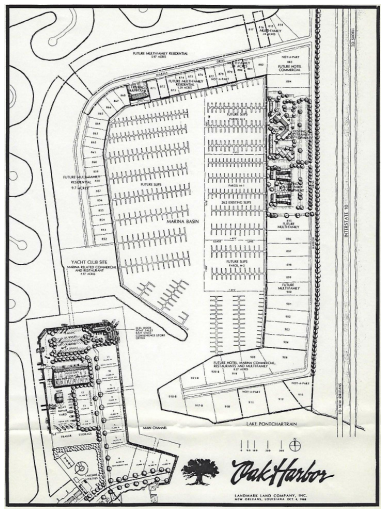
Based upon Landmark Land Co.'s promises, the Eden Isles Homeowners' Association dropped their objects to the I-10 interchange, and the I-10 interchange at Eden Isles was approved. Landmark Land Co. acquired 4,600 acres of undeveloped land straddling the interstate in addition to 171 existing home lots in Eden Isles.

Once Landmark succeeded in getting approval of the I-10 interchange and their PUD, they broke their promises to the residents of Eden Isles. Landmark did the following to inflict harm to the existing residents of the development:

1. Landmark dumped all their 171 home lots in Eden Isles on the marked at liquidation prices driving property values down.
2. Landmark burned down the "Eden Isles" Clubhouse, destroyed and covered up the "Eden Isles" golf course, tennis courts, and pool.
3. Landmark changed the name of the development from "Eden Isles" to Oak Harbor.
4. Landmark changed the name of the existing "Eden Isles" Marina to the Oak Harbor Marina.
5. Landmark changed the name on the existing water tower from "Eden Isles" to Oak Harbor
6. Landmark designed Oak Harbor Blvd. to discourage its use as the main connection between I-10 and Hwy. 11, by reducing it to two lanes and 25 miles per hour. They also developed commercial lots adjacent to the Blvd. and extended its length to approximately three times the distance of the Eden Isles connection.
7. Landmark tied into the existing "Eden Isles" sewer and water system and doubled the tie-in fees in Eden Isles to pay for expanding the system into their new development. In response to complaints, the public service commissioner ruled against the increased fees.





In summary, the new Oak Harbor development did not improved the existing Eden Isles development. The Oak Harbor development increased traffic along Eden Isles Drive, diminished the name "Eden Isles" as a quality development by removing its name from all major amities, and attempted to construct unrestricted commercial development at the entrance to Eden Isles.

Thanks to a strong vocal Homeowners' Association, Eden Isles is still a quality subdivision and offers many advantages over other waterfront communities. Eden Isles offers unrestricted access to Lake Pontchartrain, uniform concrete bulkheads, a Homeowners' Association run by residents that set their own fees and assessments. Our Eden Isles paradise has been rebuilt in our own image and will continue to grow and prosper.

HISTORY OF EDEN ISLES

Timeline

By Thomas Thompson
(Rev. Dec. 2022)

1964

The Corps of Engineers Chooses the "Barrier Plan" to protect all the Parishes that surround Lake Pontchartrain - After studying a "Barrier Plan" and a "High-Level Plan", the Corps selected the "Barrier Plan" as the best, most comprehensive and cost effective method of providing storm surge protection for the greater New Orleans area. The "Barrier Plan" was selected because it provided comprehensive protection for all the parishes surrounding Lake Pontchartrain (St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, Livingston, St. John, St. Charles, Orleans and Jefferson). Also, the Corp determined it was less expensive and could be implemented sooner than the "High-Level Plan" which proposed building 16 foot to 18.5 foot levees along the lake front without the barriers.

The "Barrier Plan" included not only flood control gates located at the Rigolets and Chef Menteur Pass areas, but construction of a series of 9.3 foot to 13.5 foot levees along the Orleans and Jefferson Parish lakefront and concrete floodwalls along the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal. The Rigolets and Chef Menteur Pass structures were intended to prevent storm surges from entering Lake Pontchartrain and overflowing the levees along the lakefront. It would only be closed only if a major storm surge event occurred. The cost estimate for the "Barrier Plan" was $85 million, in 1961 dollars, and the estimated completion date was 1978.

A Mandeville group buys a large drainage district tract of land south of Slidell and announced plans for a major development.

1965

Hurricane Betsy Hits The New Orleans Area.

Congress authorized construction and funding of the Lake Pontchartrain and Vicinity, Louisiana Hurricane Protection Project (The Barrier Plan) - in the Flood Control Act of 1965 to provide hurricane protection to areas around the lake. It was a joint effort with the federal government paying 70% and the state and local interest paying 30%. The Corps was responsible for the design and construction of the "Barrier Plan" and local interest was responsible for the maintenance of the flood controls.

Construction began, first by upgrading the levees along the New Orleans lake front and main drainage canals. But, the Corps faced project delays and cost overruns due to design changes caused by technical issues, environmental concerns, legal challenges, and local opposition to various aspects of the project.

1969

The Eden Isles Development Begins - Leisure Inc., a Monroe-based company obtained 5,300 acres of marsh south of Slidell, bisected by Interstate 10 and began development of Eden Isles. Eden Isles was to be a resort-style community, ultimately to include 12,000 residential sites, most of which would be waterfront lots.

Hurricane Camille hit Pass Christian, Mississippi - August 15, 1969

1971

Eden Isles Pioneers - After construction began, Eden Isles had to overcome several obstacles to convince people to buy property in Eden Isles. The land was a flat reclaimed marsh without trees and a lake breeze that constantly blew construction debris and dust across the subdivision. You could see for miles in all directions, Eden Isles looked more like a desert than a Garden of Eden. It was hard to convince some people to buy in Eden Isles because with the strong breeze that constantly blew across the vast open land they were concerned about hurricane winds. Others were concerned about soil subsidence, because Eden Isles was reclaimed from a marsh. The concerns about soil subsidence have since proven unfounded since Eden Isles soil is hard clay on top of sand strata and Eden Isles has never had a subsidence issue.

The developer showed pictures of the future golf course, marina, and clubhouse. The developer provided a security guard at the Highway 11 entrance and maintained the common grounds. The sales office was located on Hwy.11, at the entrance to Eden Isles, and the salesmen took people on tour through the main canals on a large motor yacht. A large observation tower was constructed on Windward Passage for people to see the undeveloped areas and pick out their lots. Eden Isles was a wilderness full of ducks, snakes, nutrias and alligators and the first inhabitants were true pioneers.

The clubhouse and the first homes built in Eden Isles had Polynesian roof designs. Although the clubhouse located at the end of Pebble Beach Drive is no longer in existence, Polynesian style homes can still be found along Eden Isle Drive.

1974

Save Our Wetlands Files Suit to Stop Eden Isles Development - Save Our Wetlands Inc. filed suit against Leisure Inc., St. Tammany Parish, and the Corps of Engineers to halt the Eden Isles project. Most of the residents living in Eden Isles attended the hearings in federal court and the Homeowners' Association collected donations, hired an attorney, and intervened in the suit as a defendant.

The Eden Isles Homeowners' Association Adopted Their By-laws - November 17, 1974.

1977

Corps Faced Opposition To The "Barrier Plan" - As a result of a lawsuit filed by Save Our Wetlands, Inc. and the St. Tammany Parish Police Jury, a court enjoined the Corps from constructing the barrier complexes, and certain other parts of the project until a revised environmental impact statement could be prepared and accepted. In addition St. Tammany Representative, Ed Scogin sent a letter to the Corps of Engineers in opposition to storm surge structures to protect the Lake Pontchartrain Basin.

Eden Isles Developer Goes Bankrupt - Leisure Inc. defaulted on its loan and was taken over by Eden Isles, Inc., a company controlled by the Security Pacific National Bank of Los Angles. As a result of the bankruptcy development of Eden Isles came to a standstill. It was later speculated that the development failed because it was too ambitious for the market with unrealistic sales projections and poor access (Highway only, Interstate 10 did not have an Eden Isles exit).

The Corps, Not An Environmental Law Suit, Stopped Plans To Protect The Lake Basin -
The environmental group, "Save Our Wetlands," and the St. Tammany Police Jury sued the Corps saying the EIS (Environmental Impact Statement) was inadequate. In 1977, Judge Charles Schwartz, agreed that the EIS was inadequate. Judge Schwartz enjoined the Corps from further construction of the barrier structures and associated structures at Chef Menteur Pass and the Rigolets until the Corps submitted an EIS that complies with the Department of the Environmental Impact Statement Army Regulation No. 1105-2-507, Paragraph 7a:

Judge Charles Schwartz said: "The foregoing opinion should in no way be construed as precluding the Lake Pontchartrain project as proposed or reflecting on its advisability in any manner. The Court's opinion is limited strictly to the finding that the environmental impact statement of August, 1974 for this project was legally inadequate. Upon proper compliance with the law with regard to the impact statement this injunction will be dissolved and any hurricane plan thus properly presented will be allowed to proceed".

Judge Schwartz did not stop or oppose the project. Judge Schwartz simply said the Corps must submit a proper EIS and then he would allow the project to proceed. Why didn't the Corps revise their EIS and resubmit?

It is unlikely that properly designed structures restricting storm surge from entering Lake Pontchartrain only when a storm approaches would have a negative impact on the lakes environment. Perhaps the Corps' reason not to resubmit their EIS was based upon local political opposition and not environmental issues.

St. Tammany Parish State Representative Ed Scogin believed structures at the Rigolets and Chef Menteur Pass would harm the Lake Pontchartrain environment and he used his political influence to convince the St. Tammany Parish Police Jury to join the suit against the structures.

The Corps lost both political and popular support for the barriers by not submitting a proper EIS. Once the Corps lost support for the barriers, it decided it wasn't worth the effort to submit a proper EIS and chose to protect only the lake's south shore. The Corps failed to see the devastating consequences of that decision.

1978

The Krewe Of Bilge Has Its First Mardi Gras Boat Parade – The first Krewe of Bilge boat parade was started when a small group of Eden Isles residents decided it would be fun to decorate their boats and go around the neighborhood throwing carnival beads and trinkets to their friends. The event was so popular that the group decided to have a Mardi Gras boat parade every year.

1979

Save Our Wetlands Loses Their law Suit - The U.S. Supreme Court ruled against Save Our Wetlands Inc. and said the Eden Isles development could continue. (Times-Picayune 10/30/79)

1980

Moonraker Island Is Developed – The original Moonraker Lake was land locked and spring fed with fresh, cold, clear, turquoise water. Moonraker was developed as an Independent subdivision with its own homeowners Association and covenants. However, Moonraker's small population was unable to maintain their HOA association and eventually it was dissolve.

1981

The Eden Isles Security Committee Was Formed to collect contributions and hire a private security guard to man the guardhouse at Hwy. 11. The developer, at no charge to the property owners, had been providing the security guard but when the development was taken over by Eden Isles, Inc., as a result of the bankruptcy, this free amenity ended.

Eden Isles Homeowners' Association Declares Subdivision Off Limits To Aircraft - The St. Tammany Parish Council at the request of the Eden Isles Homeowners' Association passed Ordinance 81-298. The ordinance makes it unlawful for aircraft to take off, land, or taxi in or on any road or waterway located within Eden Isles. This ordinance was pursued by the Eden Isles Homeowners' Association as a direct result of seaplanes and helicopters landing in the subdivision. (See plane crash in 1985)

1983

Eden Isles Homeowners' Association Gets Single Family Zoning For Unit 4 - The Eden Isles Homeowners' Association petitioned the St. Tammany Parish to re-zone Unit 4, from R-Rural to single family residential, A-4 designation.

Eden Isles Gets Street Lights - Lighting District # 7 was created to provide streetlights in Eden Isles and other areas on the Northshore.

1985

Corps Of Engineers Abandons Its Plan To Build A Storm Surge Barrier Along The Eastern Edge Of Lake Pontchartrain – After years of delays the Corps decided to abandon its "Barrier Plan" and adopted the less controversial "High-Level Plan" that was originally rejected in 1964 because of its higher cost and limited protection. It is important to note that the court in 1977 did not rule against the "Barrier Plan". The court simply required a revision to the EIS Environmental Impact Statement. The Corps decision to abandon the "Barrier Plan" was not based on engineering data, storm surge data, technical considerations, financial constraints or any substantiated environmental issues, but simply because the Corps chose to take the path of least resistance (See 1977 above).

Eden Isles Homeowners' Association Brings Charges Against Pilot - A seaplane crashed while attempting to land in the waterway between Hwy. 11 and Moonraker, no one was injured. The Eden Isles Homeowners' Association was fed up with pilots landing their aircraft in our subdivision and asked the Sheriff's Office to ticket the pilot in accordance with the Parish ordinance (81-298, dated October 22, 1981). The Sheriff's Office refused to issue the ticket and the Homeowners' Association took their case directly to the District Attorney. The Pilot was later charged and fined $200 and found guilty of pilot error by the Federal Safety Board. As a result of the extensive newspaper articles written about this issue and the Eden Isles Homeowners' Association involvement with the FAA, word got out and aircraft stopped landing in Eden Isles. (Times Picayune, 04/20/85)

Hurricane Juan Hits Eden Isles – Hurricane Juan was a very small hurricane that lingered off the coast of Louisiana for days and pushed more water into Eden Isles than any of the long time residents could ever remember. However, even with the strong tidal surge of Hurricane Juan, the water still did not

flood any homes or cover the streets, with the exception of a few locations where clogged drainage culverts prevented the streets from draining.

1987

Landmark Land Co. Buys Eden Isles Inc. – Landmark Land Co. acquired Eden Isles Inc. for $14 million from Security Pacific National Bank of Los Angles. The entire purchase included 171 existing homes lots in Eden Isles and approximately 4,600 acres of undeveloped land straddling the interstate. As a condition of the sale, Security Pacific guaranteed that the Eden Isles I-10 interchange that had begun in January of 1987, would be completed (Times Picayune, 01/22/87; Times Picayune, 05/12/88; Times Picayune, 09/17/88; City Business, 10/24/88; Times Picayune, 01/29/89; Times Picayune, 08/01/91).

Eden Isles Homeowners' Association Keeps The Hwy. 11 Bridge Open - The Louisiana State Highway Department recommended closing the Hwy. 11 Bridge permanently. The Highway Department said the bridge pilings are badly deteriorated and that accidents on the narrow roadway are likely to cost Louisiana big money in court. Eden Isles Homeowners' Association joined with other residential and business associations to fight attempts to close the Hwy. 11 Bridge. The bridge opened in 1928 as the privately owned $5million Watson-Williams toll bridge. The state took it over 10 years later and lifted the tolls. (Times Picayune, 05/23/87)

1988

A Community Service District Is Proposed For Eden Isles – Homeowners have been seeking solutions to the chronic problems of violations of restrictive covenants, lack of maintenance of neutral grounds and vacant lots, abandoned houses and street disrepair. Eden Isles homeowners met at the First Baptist Church on Pontchartrain Drive and proposed establishing a community service district. The legislation that was proposed would have to be approved by the Police Jury and then the Legislature. Homeowners are aiming for the November 8th election. (Times-Picayune 02-25-88)

Eden Isles Taxing Bill Wins Senate Approval – Louisiana House Bill No. 801, creating a community services district in Eden Isles, won 34-0 approval in the Senate. The bill allows Eden Isles residents to tax themselves and the revenue from this tax would remain in Eden Isles and be governed by a board of five Eden Isles residents. The legislation would allow the "District" to enforce the Covenants and Restrictions, cut vacant lots, hire security guards, and provide a host of other amenities. Under the legislation, the service district could levy a parcel fee to provide services, but only if a Majority of voters agree. The Community Services District was immediately challenged and much controversy followed. (Times Picayune, 02/25/88; Times Picayune, 06/21/88; Times Picayune, 07/21/88; Times Picayune, 08/10/88; Times Picayune, 11/11/88; Times Picayune, 04/05/89; Times Picayune, 04/26/89; Times Picayune, 07/12/89; Times Picayune, 07/13/89)

Eden Isles Homeowners' Association Makes Landmark Redesign The I-10 Access Road - On February 23, 1988, 400 people attended the Eden Isles Homeowners' Association meeting to hear Landmark Land Co.'s presentation on how their development will enhance Eden Isles. At that time, Landmark was trying their best to be seen as a good neighbor in order to get Eden Isles to drop its objections to the I-10 interchange plan. Landmark originally planed to channel all the traffic from the interstate directly through Eden Isles Drive to Hwy. 11. The Eden Isles Homeowners' Association objected and demanded that Oak Harbor provide a direct route from the interstate to Hwy. 11. Oak Harbor finally agreed to provide a four lane, 35 mph, direct access to Hwy. 11.

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Landmark Makes Presentation To Eden Isles Homeowners - Close to 400 people attended the Eden Isles Homeowners Association meeting to hear Landmark Land's presentation on February 23rd. The general consensus of those in attendance is that Landmark's plans should enhance the area and the spirit in which Landmark is attempting to work with the Association should provide growth in the Eden Isles area. (The Eden Isles News Letter, March 1988)

Landmark Land Receives Parish Zoning Approval to Build Oak Harbor - Parish zoning and planning commission approved the necessary zoning changes needed for Landmark Land to build Oak Harbor Yacht and Country Club on 980 acres just north of Eden Isles. The lots will be priced in the mid $40,000 range and the homes will cost from $150,000 to $200,000. The initial phase also includes realigning the 18-hole golf course that serves Eden Isles residents and building an interchange at I-10. A road will also be built through the proposed development from the interchange to U.S. 11. (Times-Picayune 05-12-88)

Eden Isles Homeowners' Association Gets the Right to Use the Eden Isles Logo - The Eden Isles Homeowners' Association entered into a licensing agreement with landmark Land Development Corp. for the right to use the Eden Isles Logo which they acquired from Eden Isles, Inc. This agreement gives the Eden Isles Homeowners' Association the right to use the logo for promotional material as well as their official letterheads, etc. (The Eden Isles News Letter, June 1988)

First Five Members Of The New Eden Isles Community Service District Is Elected – The homeowners' association came up with the idea for a community services district after two years of searching for solutions to subdivision problems such as unkempt medians and vacant lots. Critics of the service district secured four of the five commission seats at an election held at Salmen High School. Many residents thought they would have an opportunity to vote on whether the district should be created, but when they learned that it was created without a vote, they became angry. If no tax is adopted in four years, the district will lapse. (Times-Picayune, 07-21-88)

The New Eden Isles Community Service District Holds First Meeting – About 50 residents crammed into a tiny water district office on Pontchartrain Drive as the commission elected officers. Some of the residents are worried that a majority of the commissioners will sabotage any chance that the district could be a success. Residents attending the meeting said they are primarily concerned about security and beautification. (Times-Picayune 08-10-88)

September 1988, **Oak Harbor Begins Construction** - Landmark Land Co. broke ground on the 4,600 acre Oak Harbor development.

December 1988, Landmark Land Co. stopped their $1,500 security subsidy to Eden Isles, which had paid for security guards at the Hwy. 11 entrance.

December 1988, a letter from Distinctive Real Estate provided the following Eden Isles statistics:

Number of homes sold in 1988	35	
Average price	$110,341	
Highest price	$165,000	
Lowest price	$55,000	
Number of homes for sale in Dec. 1988	37	
Average asking price	$134,704	
Highest asking price	$325,000	
Lowest asking price		$23,800

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1989

Eden Isles Community Services District Presents First Plan – Eden Isles would have three security guards around the clock, two manning the guardhouses and one on roving patrol. The street medians would be mowed semi-monthly under the master services plan as a cost of less than $425,000 annually. Another meeting to hash out this plan and others that are being drafted is set for April 24th. The Community Services District's brief history has been strained by political tensions between supporters and a fraction of skeptics who helped elect four of the five commissioners. (Times Picayune 4-5-89)

Eden Isles Community Services District Presents Additional Plans – Two additional plans were presented to provide security and property maintenance within Eden Isles. One plan eliminates security guards at the guardhouses and replaces them with additional Sheriff's Office patrols and hires a landscape company to maintain medians and rights of way. The other plan would eventually dissolve the district, replacing it with a Property Owners Alliance board to levy fees for services and administrative costs. Property owners would have to vote every year on services proposed by the board for the next year. (Times Picayune 4-26-89)

Eden Isles Mandatory Security Fee is Shut Down – The court ruled that subdivision owners cannot enact more restrictive regulations without the consent of all subdivision residents. The Homeowners Association stopped making collections after the Supreme Court decision was made, and discontinued the security team at the entrance to the neighborhood. The president of the Homeowners Association said he didn't anticipate the association would seek further authority. "We're going to sit back and lick our wounds," he said. (Times Picayune 5-23-89)

Eden Isles Identity Crises - Eden Isles residents feared that they were going to lose their identity. Soon after Landmark Land Co. bought out the developers of Eden Isles they began removing the Eden Isles name and replacing it with Oak Harbor. They said they would allow Eden Isles to change its name to Oak Harbor, an offer the Eden Isles residents declined. They closed down the Eden Isles golf course and burned down the Eden Isles Club House (literally). Then they changed the marina's name from Eden Isles to Oak Harbor. The Eden Isles name and Logo was removed from the Water tower and replaced with the Oak Harbor name and Logo. But when Landmark Land asked the state Department of Transportation and Development to put "Oak Harbor," not Eden Isles," on the new I-10 road signs the Eden Isles Homeowners' Association declared war and demanded that the name Eden Isles also appear on the sign and won. (Times Picayune, 01/24/89; Times Picayune, 03/15/89; Times Picayune 6/5/89)

The Landmark Land Co. Sponsors and Eden Isles Family Picnic – In an effort to help shed their bad neighbor image Landmark had a party for the residents of Eden Isles with free beer, food, games and prizes. At the party Landmark tried to improve their image after burning down the Eden Isles clubhouse, changing the name on the water tower, renaming the Eden Isles golf course and marina, and then trying to eliminate the name Eden Isles from the new I-10 road signs. At the picnic, residents were offered membership packages for the new Oak Harbor golf course and clubhouse. (Times Picayune 6/10/89)

Eden Isles Homeowners' Association Wins Fight to Eliminate Drainage District Tax - December 1989, after a two year fight by the Eden Isles Homeowners' Association drainage district, two boundaries were redrawn to exclude Eden Isles and eliminate the drainage tax. Eden Isles residents had been paying a drainage tax for a forced drainage system using pumps located outside of Eden Isles. (The Eden Isles News Letter, December 1989)

1990

I-10 Over Pass Is Opened - The Eden Isles I-10 overpass at Oak Harbor Blvd. opened at a cost of $9 million. (Times Picayune 04-07-90)

Controversial Eden Isles Fee Scheduled To Go On Ballot – The Eden Isles Community Services District decided to let homeowners vote on April 7 for a proposal for parcel fees to finance security and grounds keeping. "If the plan fails to pass, it will certainly signal the end of our security in Eden Isles," said the chairman of the association's security committee. (The Eden Isles News Letter, & Times Picayune March 1990)

Eden Isles Community Services District Is Abolished – Voters rejected the services district concept with the power to raise money for security and common ground maintenance and the district was abolished. (Times Picayune 07-13-90)

November 27, 1990, The Eden Isles Homeowners' Association By-Laws Are Revised - The Eden Isles Homeowners' Association revised their By-laws.

1991

Toll Span May Replace the Hwy 11 Bridge – As an alternative to closing the Hwy. 11 Bridge, something the Louisiana Department of Transportation has been requesting since 1989, a proposal is now being considered to construct a new 4 lane toll bridge. (Times Picayune, 04/24/91)

Landmark Faces Financial Difficulty– All of Landmark's properties is owned by the parent company, Oak Tree Savings of New Orleans, which has been in operation under a supervisory agreement with the federal Office of Thrift Supervision since September because of financial difficulties. Because of Oak Tree's financial problems and federal supervision of company operations, Landmark's plans to build a $4 million golf course clubhouse have been put on hold. (Times Picayune 08-01-91)

Eden Isles Fishing Rodeo - October 5 & 6, 1991, Eden Isles held its first Fishing Rodeo and it was a big success! Two bands provided music, Frankie and the Cruisers performed an outstanding Las Vegas style show, and the dance floor located under the big tent was jammed. A raffle gave away a 19" TV, microwave, disc player, VCR, 10 speed bicycle, Sony watchman TV, cassette player, several stereo systems, cordless phone, fishing supplies, hand painted Eden Isles buoy, hardware supplies, and much, much more. There were 101 entries in the Poker Run and the rodeo made over $9,000 for the Homeowners' Association. (The Eden Isles News Letter, September 1991)

1992

Eden Isles Homeowners' Association Negotiates Lower Waste Disposal Rates - January 1992, the Eden Isles Homeowners' Association approached Waste Management and negotiated a rate reduction from $18 per month to $16 per month along with a senior citizen discount for those over 63 old.

Greenforce Is Established – There are over 15 acres of public green spaces located throughout Eden Isles that the Parish will not maintain. Once Landmark Land purchased the remaining property within Eden Isles, they stopped paying to cut the Eden Isles' public green spaces and focused only on the Oak Harbor development. The Eden Isles HOA began requesting voluntary contributions to cut and maintain the public green spaces.

1993

The Population of Eden Isles Increases to Over 900 Homes

Clipper Inc. Applies For Permit to Develop Property at the End of Moonraker Drive

Wayward Manatee Moves Into Eden Isles - The following is taken from the November 12, 1993 Times-Picayune: A wily manatee played watery hide-and-seek Thursday with a small army of rescuers in Eden Isles. The manatee, estimated to be 8 to 10 feet long and weighing 800 to 1,000 pounds, seemed almost magical as he eluded would be rescuers. Scores of Eden Isles residents in a jovial party mood flocked to backyard wooden docks behind Eydie Lane and Charles Court armed with cameras, beer and fried chicken to watch the daylong rescue effort. By nightfall, the elusive plant-eating aquatic mammal, which probably strayed during migration efforts, was still swimming freely in the Eden Isles waterways. Residents first spotted the manatee Saturday and since have seen it circling around in the waterways.

Throughout the warm afternoon, the manatee on schedule would break the surface and a large black snout followed by a graceful arch, huge brown back and flippers. The manatee would then slide back underwater. Six divers from Marineland Oceanarium in Gulfport, Mississippi, spent several hours in the water, patiently moving a huge net in an attempt to capture the manatee. All efforts to capture the manatee failed and after several days the manatee simply disappeared. (Times Picayune, 11/12/93; Times Picayune, 11/13/93)

1994

Clipper Estates Is Developed – The remaining undeveloped land adjacent to Moonraker Lake is developed as an Independent subdivision with its own Homeowners Association and covenants. The Clipper Estates developer opened up the spring fed, fresh water, Moonraker Lake to provide access to Lake Pontchartrain.

Moonraker Island Homeowners Association Tried To Reactivate Their Association - On October 3, 1994 a meeting was held at the Tammany Yacht Club to reactivate the Moonraker Island Homeowners Association (M.I.H.O.A). Some of the issues that were discussed were: The Clipper Island developer's desire to sell a strip of land that surrounds Moonraker Lake to the homeowners. The Clipper Island developer wants to secede from the Moonraker covenant and establish their own covenants.

1995

Tornado Hits Eden Isles - May 8, 1995, a tornado hit Eden Isles and does extensive damage to several homes, but fortunately no one was hurt. It was heart warming to see how the community pitched in to help those in need.

The Famous May Flood Hits New Orleans And Slidell - May 10, 1995, as much as 18 inches of rain came in six hours and when it finally stopped much of New Orleans, Metairie and Slidell was flooded, but not Eden Isles. Because, Eden Isles is built up so high and drains directly in to Lake Pontchartrain Eden Isles didn't experience any flooding.

1996

St. Tammany Police Jury Denied Spur/Burger King Sign - April, Oak Harbor developer was denied a sign permit to construct a 45' high, 250 sf. Spur/Burger King sign at the I-10 entrance to Eden Isles. This was an issue the Eden Isles Homeowners Association lobbied against.

Eden Isles Directory Was Published – The HOA published a directory of all residents living in Eden Isles, containing their name, address and phone number, along with a street map of Eden Isles.

1997

Attempt To Make Security Fees Mandatory Fails - The guard service committee organized a petition drive to revise the covenants making payment for security mandatory. In March 1997, the committee determined they had enough signatures to legally amend the covenants. The security committee sent out notices to all residents that payment for security guard service was now mandatory and failure to comply would result in having a lien placed on their property.

The legality of the covenant revision was immediately challenged and a suit was filed against its enforcement. The issue was resolved when a similar lawsuit in Briar Lake Subdivision went before the Louisiana Supreme court and they ruled that unanimous consent of all lot owners is needed to make covenants more restrictive.

The security committee decided that they would no longer maintain guard service based on voluntary contributions and stopped the guard service. The security committee asked our State Representatives to pass a law that would allow subdivision covenants to be made more restrictive without the unanimous consent of all lot owners. The result of their efforts was House Bill #62, which allows subdivisions to amend their covenants to make them more restrictive if approved by two-thirds of the lot owners. However, the House Bill also provides for exemptions to individual property owners that do not want to be covered by the new covenants. (Times Picayune, 05/23/98) House Bill #62, has now become LA Rev Stat § 9:1141.6 .

1999

Security Cameras Are Installed In Eden Isles – New security camera system was installed at each guardhouse to monitor the vehicles that pass each guard house. (The Eden Islander, 1999 #5)

Committee Evaluates Feasibility To Revise Covenants In Accordance With LA Rev Stat § 9:1141.6 - A covenants committee was established by the Homeowners' Association to evaluate revisions to the covenants including a revision to include mandatory assessments. The committee met with the Association's lawyer, and recommended to the Homeowners' Board of Directors a covenant revision that included mandatory assessments. The Homeowners' Board of Directors estimated the cost of conducting a formal vote on the covenants in accordance with the Louisiana requirements to be approximately $2,000.

Before committing to such an expense the board conducted an informal vote in May 2000, through the "Eden Islander" to determine if there was enough support to justify the expense of conducting a formal vote to impose mandatory assessment. Of the 178 Responses received (a number that represents approximately 17% of the homeowners), 86 voted, "YES", they are willing to commit to a mandatory assessment, and 92 voted, "NO". Based upon the response the board chose not pursue mandatory assessments.

Eden Isles Web Sight Goes On Line – The Eden Isles Homeowners Association established a homeowner's website. (The Eden Isles News Letter, October 1999)

Eden Isles Homeowners' Association Establishes a Water Watch Committee - A committee is established to take water samples within the canals and transport them to a laboratory for analysis. The goal is to have a comprehensive water quality evaluation of the Eden Isles waterways before the summer swimming season arrives to assure residents that our waterways are pollution free. A bacterial count of 200 or greater would indicate a pollution problem. Eden Isles water quality test determined waterways were pollution free and safe to swim in. The only counts that exceeded 200 were near the Coast Water Works sewer treatment plant on Lakeview Dr. As a precaution, residents were advise not to swim in the waterways immediately after heave rain falls. (The Eden Isles News Letter, October 1999)

2000

St. Tammany Parish Council Denied Permit To Build Storage Facility - At the June 6 meeting the St. Tammany Parish Council sustained the Zoning Commission's denial of a conditional use permit for a large, three story high mini storage to be built on Marina Drive at the entrance to Eden Isles. This was an issue the Eden Isles Homeowners' lobbied against.

Lakeshore Estates Gains Access To Lake Pontchartrain – Developer Robert Torres Jr. overcomes wetlands issues and opens his Lakeshores Estates water front development across the interstate from Eden Isles to Lake Pontchartrain. (Times Picayune, 09/29/99; Times Picayune, 03/02/00)

2001

A Large Fish Kill In Eden Isles Canals - A large fish kill hits the Gulf coast, including Eden Isles. The kill only affects mullet and the DEQ attributes the kill to a combination of a parasitic heartworm and the stress brought on by a hard freeze.

Eden Isles Archives

Highway Department Proposes Closing Highway 11 Bridge for Five Months - The Times-Picayune reported that the Hwy. 11 Bridge is going to be closed on February 19th, and remain closed until resurfacing is completed, around July 4th. This meant closing the bridge nine weeks before beginning construction. Representatives from the Eden Isle Homeowners' Association, along with other concerned citizens, attended a town meeting on February 15, 2001, to express our concern over the early closing before construction was to begin. (Times Picayune 02-13-01)

Parish President, Kevin Davis, was at the town meeting and he voiced his concern that the early closing had not been coordinated with his office and there has not been adequate time to develop proper detour plans. State Senator, Mr. Tom Schedler, was also at the meeting and responded to our concerns by contacting the head of the Highway Department and convincing him to keep the bridge open until construction begins. This was great news, not only because of the traffic delays on the twin span, but also because of the added traffic on Eden Isles Drive.

The construction consisted of repairing 5 to 10% of the under structure pilings and supports, resurfacing the bridge with concrete, replacing the draw bridge electrical system, refurbishing the pen on the south leaf of the north drawbridge, and installing new rails near the drawbridge. Construction was completed in the summer of 2001.

December 5th Meeting About Parking/Abandoning Vehicles on Public Streets – Eden Isles Parish Representative, Coach Thomas, held a community meeting to discuss enforcement of Parish Ordinances that prohibit parking/abandoning vehicles on public streets. In addition to Representative Thomas, the other Parish officials present were: Mr. Mike Savant, legal counsel for the parish; Mr. Lane Carson, Assistant District Attorney; Mr. Sidney Fontenot, Director of Planning; Mr. Donald Sharp and Al Tailor with the Sheriff's Office; and Mr. Kevin Davis, St. Tammany Parish President.

Mr. Carson read the two ordinances, which state it is unlawful to park or abandon a vehicle on any public street for more than 48 consecutive hours, and it is unlawful to park or abandon boats, trailers, motor homes, or vehicles over six feet in width for more that 24 hours. It was also stated that the 48-hour ordnance applies parish wide, but the 24-hour ordinance for oversized vehicles only applies to district 13. Residents were given five minutes each to express their opinions. The meeting concluded with the parish's commitments to enforce the ordinances. (Times Picayune 12-7-01 & Eden Isles News Letter, January 2002)

Moonraker Bridge Repair - After two years of lobbing, The Eden Isles HOA finally convinced the Parish to repair the Moonraker Bridge. The erosion under the bridge approaches had gotten so bad that caverns five feet high, ten feet wide, and fifteen feet long had formed and there was nothing supporting the approaches to the bridge. (Note: the state is responsible for maintaining the Eden Isles bridges, and the Parish is responsible for maintaining the Enterprise Drive Bridge – (The December Eden Isles News Letter)

2002

Alaska Earthquake Makes Waves In Louisiana – Boats started rocking in Eden Isles as a result of a 7.9 magnitude earthquake in a remote interior area of Alaska. No damage was reported. (Times Picayune, 11/04/02)

2003

Church Property Is Subdivided - The large open area located in the 300 block of Windward Passage adjacent to Gretel Cove, formally owned by a church was sold to a developer. The developer subdivided the property into single-family home sites.

2004

Eden Isles Architectural Committee Wins Lawsuit – The Eden Isles HOA sued a resident for building a boat dock beyond the 12' limit. The opposing attorney's argument was other residents built into the waterways without Architectural approval therefore, the covenants are abandoned and not enforceable. The HOA's attorney argued that ninety-six percent of lot owners in Unit 4 are in compliance with the covenants and any structure beyond the 12' foot limit into the rear easement violates the covenants and a safety issue for nautical navigation of the waterways.

Presiding Judge Peter Garcia, after meeting with both attorneys in chambers ruled from the bench that the Eden Isles covenants are not abandoned and are enforceable. The two attorneys and three members of the architectural committee mutually agreed that the resident would tear down and remove the portion of the boat house/hoist that extends beyond the 12' limit. (Reference, Eden Isles News Letter July 2004)

Fire Hydrants Out Of Service – Fire District No. 1 inspected Eden Isles fire hydrants and found the following in need of repair: 115 Carina Circle, 100 Constellation Drive, 226 Constellation Drive, 1062 Mariners Cove, 330 Moonraker Drive, and 427 Moonraker Drive. Coast Waterworks is responsible for the maintenance of the hydrants and was notified of the issue.

2005

New Security Cameras Installed – A new sophisticated camera security system was installed at both guardhouses (March Eden Isles News Letter)

Hurricane Katrina – On August 29, 2005 the worst natural disaster ever to hit the United States left total devastation all along the gulf coast from Texas to Alabama. For the first time in the 36 year history of Eden Isles, homes were flooded with two to six feet of water depending on the home's elevation and proximity to the lake. The western edge of the eye passed over Eden Isles and pushed a 16' tidal surge into Lake Pontchartrain covering our waterways with storm debris. Unlike New Orleans, Slidell and other communities that were "Protected" by levees; the tidal surge came and went in just a few hours instead of

saturating homes for days. This allowed the residents to return almost immediately and begin clean-up.

Large sections of the I-10 twin span bridge were washed away and traffic was diverted to Highway 11 at Old Spanish Trail and the old Highway 11 Bridge became the only way into or out of New Orleans from the East. The Sheriff's Department set up a road block near the entrance to Eden Isle and only allowed people with proof of residency onto our island. The Sheriff's Department also patrolled the streets and waterways of Eden Isles to protect the lives and property of the residents.

2006

The Aftermath Of Hurricane Katrina Presented Many Challenges For The Eden Isles HOA - Homes were unlivable and residents had evacuated and were unable to return. Many homeowners were fighting with their insurance companies and FEMA over temporary trailers and funding to rebuild. Storm debris was piled on lots, green spaces and in the waterways and the two guard houses on both ends of Eden Isles Drive were washed away.

Eden Isles lead the recovery effort and in about a year most of the homes in Eden Isles were repaired. It did take longer for some homeowners with inadequate flood insurance and other hardships, but Eden Isles has come back better than ever.

By August, the rebuilding of Eden Isles was underway; some residents were able to live in their renovated homes while others were still in FEMA trailers trying to find building materials and competent contractors. During this turbulent time, a few dedicated individuals stepped forward to reestablish the HOA to tackle the issues that Eden Isles now faced.

Meeting were held to decide how to help residents rebuild, clear remaining debris, clear and maintain the green spaces, deal with houses that have been abandoned, replace trees and street signs. No "Parking", "No Dumping" are placed on the green spaces to discourage residents and contractors from dumping construction debris throughout the subdivision. It was an extremely difficult and stressful year but Eden Isles came back much faster than surrounding communities.

2007

New Welcoming Signs Are Built Where Old Guard Houses Were Located – New Stucco entrance signs are built with the slogan "Waterfront Living At It's Best" along with gardens where the old guard houses once stood before Hurricane Katrina. Storm recovery is ongoing with abandoned homes, residents living in FEMA trailers, street drains clogged up, abandoned boats left on green spaces and sunken boats in our waterways.

2008

Eden Isles Fire Hydrants In Need of Repair – Eden Isles HOA contact the Louisiana Department of Environmental Services concerning fire hydrants in need of repair. The Department of Environmental Services contacted Coast Waterworks concerning the issue and Coast Waterworks indicated that the hydrants are in the process of being repaired. The Department of Environmental Services will perform inspections to verify that this work is completed.

Last Remaining Hurricane Katrina Storm Debris Is Picked Up – Damaged vehicles, trailers and boats have finally been removed from streets, common grounds, vacant lots and waterways.

Eden Isles Events Held in 2008:

Krewe of Bilge Mardi Gras Boat Parade
HOA Christmas Party

2009

Corp Of Engineers Holds Meeting On Storm Surge Protection For St. Tammany - June 16, 2009 – After years of neglect and inactivity from elected officials the Eden Isles Flood Committee organized a Corps of Engineers public meeting to publicize the need for a comprehensive barrier protection system.

The turnout for the Corps' meeting on June 16th was overwhelming, a standing room only crowd of over 1,000 people showed up at the Harbor Center. The Corps' gave a presentation and admitted that they have no plans to protect the 1.5 million people who live around the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain from storm surge. Attendees left the meeting frustrated and angry that they were not allowed to speak at the meeting and voice their concerns over the Corps' decision to disregard the storm surge protection needs of the north shore.

St Tammany Parish Counsel Supports Storm Surge Barriers for the Lake - On July 2nd the St Tammany Parish Council held their own storm surge meeting and passed a resolution in support of storm surge barriers for the east end of Lake Pontchartrain. This was an important procedural step needed to reverse the position the Parish took in 1977, when the St. Tammany Parish Police Jury vote against structures to keep storm surge from entering Lake Pontchartrain, which help convince the Corps' to abandon the project..

New I-10 Twin Span Opens - July 9, 2009, four years after being destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. The East bound lane of the new Interstate 10 twin span bridge is opened for traffic.

Eden Isles is removed from the I-10 Exit Sign – August 2009 - The Department of Transportation replaced the Eden Isles exit signs, removing the name "Eden Isles". After fighting so hard to have the community designation of Eden Isles placed on the sign in 1989 the EIHOA immediately contact the DOTD requested Eden Isles be reinstated on the sign. On October 30, 2009 the DOTD refused our request with the following explanation: "Rural interchanges are generally designated by guide signs that contain the intersecting route marker legend and the community name. Urban interchanges, however, are usually named after the intersecting roadway as specified by DOTD and FHWA signing standards. Since the Interstate 10 interchange at Oak Harbor is considered an urban interchange, Eden Isles would not qualify as the primary designation under current standards. The old signs with the Eden Isles legend along Interstate 10 qualified because the area was considered rural at that time." The DOTD has added supplemental guide signs that state "Northshore Harbor Center, Eden Isles, Next Exit".

Security Cameras Are Reinstalled At Island Entrances - The EIHOA reinstalled security cameras with digital recording capability to replace the original security cameras that were mounted on the roofs of our guardhouses and destroyed by hurricane Katrina. The new system is far superior to our old system and it is capable of recording the license number, make, model and color of all vehicles entering and/or leaving the Eden Isles community. In the event of criminal activity, the data captured on the security system can provide the Sheriff's office with the necessary information needed for their investigation. This state of the art security system is now protecting our island paradise and it will provide a level of security equal to or greater than any gated community in the parish but without the gates. This system is not in place to issue speeding tickets or stop sign violators, but it will deter crime, assist in the return of stolen property, and assist in the apprehension of criminals. All inquiries for access to camera's recording database must go through the Sheriff's office. (Eden Isles' December News Letter)

High Quality Prestigious Street Signs Installed – The EIHOA Purchased and began installing high quality, prestigious street signs to enhance the status and property values within our island paradise. (Eden Isles' December News Letter)

The Regional Planning Commission (RPC) Proposes Widening Highway 11 - The project would consist of four lanes with a median from Lake Pontchartrain to Spartan Drive and would be financed with federal money. Businesses along Highway 11, strongly objected to the project; they did not want to lose free use of the highway right-of-way for parking. Because of the opposition to the project, the RPC placed the project on hold to evaluate a redesign to accommodate the business owners. (Eden Isles' December News Letter)

Eden Isles Events Held in 2009:
Krewe of Bilge Mardi Gras Boat Parade
HOA Driveway Socials

2010

The Parish Sidesteps the Corps of Engineers to Build the Schneider Canal Levee (Slidell Levee)
The Schneider Canal project was not approved for construction by the Corps of Engineers. The Parish did not conduct a detailed 533(d) study as required to demonstrate the project is technically sound, environmentally acceptable, and economically viability as required by the Corps of Engineers. Despite Eden Isles HOA concerns and repeated request for a modeling and study, St. Tammany Parish Government under Parish President Kevin Davis decided to build the Slidell levee anyway using drainage funds to circumvent federal modeling and studies requirements.

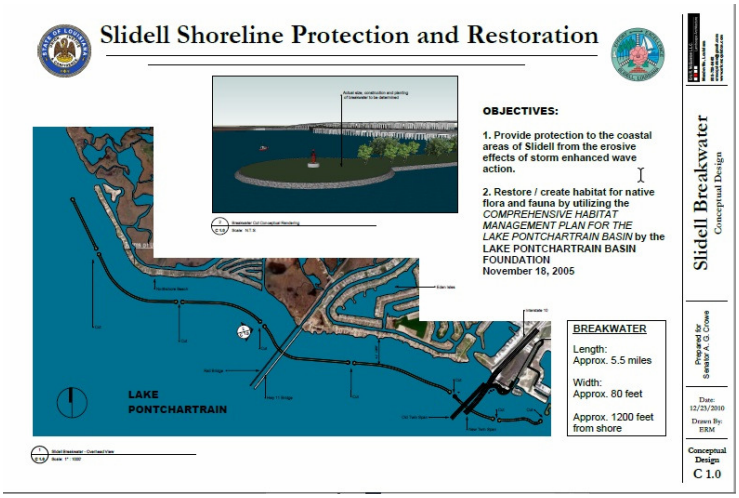
The Eden Isles position is: without a Slidell levee, surge can flow freely through Eden Isles without causing flood damage do to the high elevation of the roads and homes into the Slidell flood plain. The Slidell levee will be trap storm surge within a three-sided box (the levee, Interstate 10, and Highway 11) causing surge back flow and increase flooding within the Eden Isles community. (Eden Isles' June News Letter)

Eden Isles Events Held in 2010:

Krewe of Bilge Mardi Gras Boat Parade
HOA Driveway Socials
HOA Christmas Party

2011

Senator Crowe Proposes A Breakwater In Lake Pontchartrain - In response to the Eden Isles HOA Flood Committee's request for storm surge protection, Senator A.G. Crowe Proposes a Breakwater from the Interstate 10 Twinspan Bridge to the mouth of Bayou Liberty to protect the communities of Eden Isles, Oak Harbor, Clipper Estates, Carr Drive and Palm Lake from flooding during a hurricane. (St. Tammany News Published on Sunday, January 30, 2011)



The Eden Isles HOA Flood Committee Meet With Officials – With an election drawing near the Eden Isles HOA Flood Committee met with politicians: Mr. Garret Graves, the Chair of the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority of Louisiana (CPRA), Ms. Sherri LeBas, Secretary, Louisiana Department of Transportation, Nita Hutter, State Representative, District 104, Greg Cromer, State Representative, District 90, A. G. Crowe, State Senator, District 1, Richard Artigue, St. Tammany Parish Councilman, District 13, Jerry Binder, St. Tammany Parish Councilman, District 12, along with representatives from other organizations.

The Eden Isles HOA Flood Committee explained the concerns over the Slidell levee and the need for a comprehensive storm surge protection for the entire Lake Pontchartrain Basin.

Mr. Graves said control structures at the Rigolets and Chef Passes would provide the greatest protection and that the environmental concerns raised in the 1960's could be addressed using modern design and construction techniques; however, he felt building storm structures would take too long and funding the project would be a problem. His position on north shore protection was: the state should concentrate their time, energy and resources on smaller projects like dredging drainage waterways, constructing pumping stations, rebuild costal wetlands and constructing levee systems to protect smaller self-contained areas.

At the conclusion of the meeting Mr. Graves would not commit to including surge structures in the state's Master Plan, but said they would evaluate it. Both, Representative Hutter and Senator Crowe pledged their support for Lake Pontchartrain storm structures. (Eden Isles' September News Letter)

Eden Isles Events Held in 2011:

Krewe of Bilge Mardi Gras Boat Parade
HOA Crawfish Boil
HOA Hawaiian Luau
HOA Subdivision Garage Sale
HOA Night Out Against Crime
HOA Christmas Party

2012

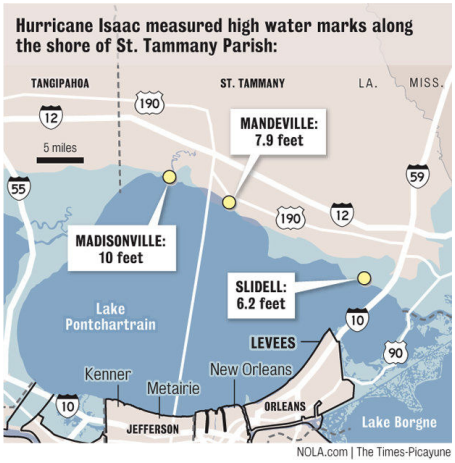
Eden Isles Flood Committee Met With The New St. Tammany Parish President Pat Brister -
In May of 2012, Eden Isles Flood Committee met with the new Parish Chief Operating Officer Bill Oiler and explained the concerns over the Slidell levee. Mr. Oiler promised to perform modeling and to conduct a study to determine the extent of flooding the Slidell levee will cause. The study was scheduled to be completed no later than October 2012. Mr. Oiler also promised to explore means of providing storm surge protection for subdivisions on the lakeside of the levee.

During meetings with Mr. Oiler agreed to conducting a surge protection feasibility study for Eden Isles, and he had identified funding to begin the surge modeling and was working with RPC and DOTD to incorporate a protection project within the Highway 11 construction project.

Congress Passes The Biggert Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act – The legislation required the NFIP to raise rates to reflect true flood risk. It will adopt new flood insurance rate maps, phase out grandfather rates, increase new rates by 20% per year, etc.

The Biggert Waters Act had a chilling effect within Eden Isles and throughout the nation. Greater New Orleans, Inc. (GNO Inc.) took the lead on addressing the problems associated with the Act. GNO Inc. organized a nation wide collation to lobby Congress to modify the Act.

Hurricane Isaac A Slow Moving Category 1 Hurricane – Isaac was not a strong storm, but it moved slowly and its westerly winds pushed the surge to the western side of the lake flooding St. John the Baptist Parish, Madisonville and flooded or damaged 500 structures in Slidell and almost 4,000 across St. Tammany Parish. Other than some street flooding, Eden Isles weathered the storm without any significant damages.



However, in an attempt to prevent flooding in Slidell, Hesco baskets that were put across Highway 11, to close the roadway gap in the Slidell levee. The barrier prevented Highway 11 access to Slidell. At the same time, the Interstate 10 ramps were under water preventing prevented Eden Isles residents access to Slidell. With Highway 11 blocked and the Interstate ramps underwater, emergency services from Slidell was unavailable. The Highway 11 blockage resulted in a drowning death when a car was submerged while driving through the flooded access ramp to Interstate 10. In 2019, the access ramps to Interstate 10 were elevated to reduce flooding. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SS2kW0kRdLg

The Corps of Engineers Hurricane Isaac Presentation - The November 14th Corps' presentation on Hurricane Isaac's impact primarily consisted of a presentation of study findings indicating that the Lake Pontchartrain south shore structures built since 2005 had a negligible effect on Hurricane Isaac's surge heights. The audience quickly changed the focus of the presentation from Hurricane Isaac to building storm surge control structures at the Rigolets and Chef Passes for the benefit of all parishes under threat of storm surge flooding.

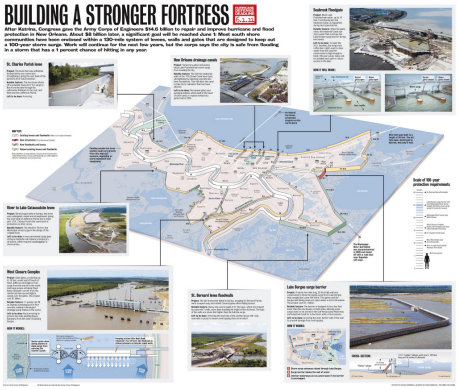
During the discussion, Colonel Fleming admitted the Corps only studied 40% of their structures to determine impact, (projects built after 2005). They also have not evaluated the combined impact of their projects functioning as one system, only as individual components. This is a critical omission since the Corps is responsible for the impact of all their projects including those constructed since 1965 and how all of their structures act collectively not individually.

Eden Isles Events Held in 2012:

Krewe of Bilge Mardi Gras Boat Parade
HOA Crawfish Boil
HOA Hawaiian Luau
HOA Subdivision Garage Sale
HOA Night Out Against Crime
HOA Christmas Party
PYMC Christmas Boat Parade

2013

Eden Isles Flood Committee Responds To Corps' Environmental Report – The Corps released their Environmental Impact Study for the south shore hurricane structures. The Corps study concluded their south shore structures have no impact to the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain. The Eden Isles Flood Committee challenged the Corps finding based upon the Corps only evaluating 40% of their structures (see Corps 2012, presentation above). The Corps agreed to perform a study of all Corps' structures built since 1965 to determine their impact on the Lake Pontchartrain Basin storm surge flooding. The study was scheduled for completion by November of 2013. The Corps never release their revised study. (See follow-up in 2018 & 2019)



Eden Isles Flood Committee Continues Its Effort To Work With St. Tammany Parish For Surge Protection- In January, the Flood Committee met with the Parish's Chief Operating Officer, Mr. Oiler, to discuss Slidell levee impact on Eden Isles. The committee was advised modeling would be done by June of 2013 and the Parish was working on plans to provide surge protection to Eden Isles.

In June 2013, Mr. Oiler abruptly retired and the Eden Isles Flood Committee asked for a status meeting with the new Parish Chief Operating Officer, Ms. Gina Campo concerning all the unresolved issues of providing surge protection for Eden Isles.

In August 2013, the Eden Isles Flood Committee met with Ms. Campo and was informed that Mr. Oiler did not leave any record of our previous meetings or what he had been working on concerning mitigating the damage caused by the Slidell levee, and the Parish would have to start from scratch in the mitigation process. Ms. Campo did say that storm surge modeling was "well on its way" and she would evaluate mitigation projects to extend flood protection to our community. Ms. Campo agreed to meet with us in October, if not sooner, to provide a status report on the modeling and mitigation plans.

In November 2013, the Eden Isles Flood Committee met with Ms. Campo and was told modeling of the Slidell levee would not be done. In addition, the Parish said a protection project for Eden Isles would cost too much, and therefore the parish will not pursue a feasibility study for Eden Isles. The parish would not respond to any further inquirers on the subject of Eden Isles surge protection.

Eden Isles Archives

Eden Isles HOA Joins The Social Networking Generation – The HOA Facebook page is established to create social home on the internet where members can share and exchange pictures and other information of a social nature. The Facebook page will also provide a method to notify residents of information and alerts quickly. www.facebook.com/EdenIslesHomeownersAssociation (Eden Isles June News Letter)

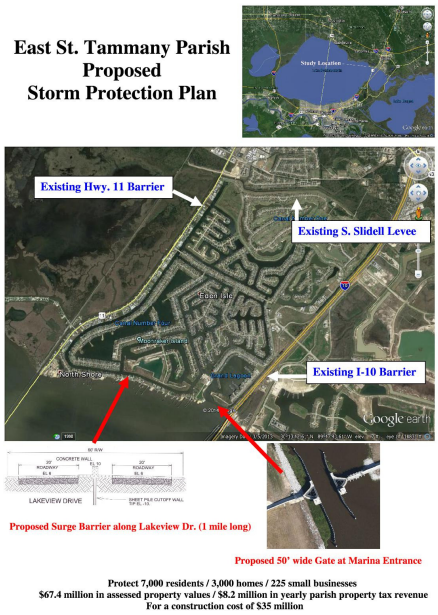
Navy SEALs Cruse through Eden Isles Waterways – A contingency of Navy SEALS stationed at the Stennis, Mississippi facility took a leisurely cruse through the Eden Isles waterways. This unusual sight affected residents differently; some were concerned that Eden Isles had become a terrorist target, while others were disappointed that advance notice was not given so they could have lined the waterways waving flags and cheering the military as they cruised by.

(YouTube video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HJWgzEbB4Y4 and Eden Isles December News Letter)

Eden Isles Events Held in 2013:

Krewe of Bilge Mardi Gras Boat Parade
HOA Crawfish Boil
HOA Hawaiian Luau
HOA Children's Day
HOA Subdivision Garage Sale
HOA Night Out Against Crime
HOA Christmas Party
Over 50 Singles Social Club is established
PYMC Christmas Boat Parade

2014



The East St. Tammany Storm Protection Committee Is Established - After being told, St. Tammany Parish will not evaluate surge protection projects for Eden Isle, the Flood Committee decided to expand its base and peruse this issue without the Parish's support.

The Eden Isles Flood Committee reorganized into the East St. Tammany Storm Protection Committee, with members appointed by the board of directors of the various homeowners associations located within the boundaries of Eden Isles (Eden Isles, Oak Harbor, Moonraker, Clipper Estates and Lakeview Drive). With a pool of over 7,000 residents to select from the committee was able to recruit professionals in engineering, storm surge modeling and construction.

The committee developed a cost benefit analysis using public demographic and government data along with a conceptual surge protection plan. The committee presented its findings to the local homeowner associations and received their support to pursue the object of storm surge protection. The committee then presented its protection plan to local, state and federal authorities with the request for a formal, independent, protection cost benefit analysis.

The Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority of Louisiana (CPRA) Master Plan Submittals - St. Tammany Parish's submittal to the CPRA for its 2017 Master Plan consisted of $362,694,957 in marsh creation projects along with Slidell levee funding. In addition, the Parish's master plan submittal stated, "Except for a small part of Slidell, a levee system along the southern border of the Parish is not practical or feasible. The only way to protect these structures is through elevation." The Parish's statements to the CPRA confirmed the Parish had no intentions to extend levee protection south of Slidell. The CPRA accepted the Parish's submittal including the position that it is not feasible to protect communities along the lakefront.

The East St. Tammany Storm Protection Committee's submittal to the CPRA for its 2017 Master Plan consisted of a formal cost benefit analysis request to determine the feasibility of extending levee protection to Eden Isles. The CPRA disregarded the Storm Protection Committee's submittal and refused to consider adding a study into their 2017 Master Plan based upon St. Tammany Parish's opposition to protect Eden Isles. (See 2016 Eden Isles Storm Surge Protection)

The St. Tammany Levee, Drainage and Conservation District Is Created - The East St. Tammany Storm Protection Committee played an important roll in the creation of the St. Tammany Levee Board and had verbiage added to the bill requiring at least four members of the board be from unincorporated areas of the parish. The board is a state agency under the CPRA and is suppose to function independently from St. Tammany Parish Government.

Moonraker Residents Reactivate Their Island Homeowners Association – Moonraker residents no longer felt that the Eden Isles HOA was adequately addressing their needs and formed an independent Civic Association to focus on needs and issues specific to Moonraker residents.

Commercial Crabbers Cause Boating Hazard In Waterways - Commercial crabbers begin placing crab traps throughout the Eden Isles waterways prompting resident complaints about safely navigating the waterways and damage to boat props and shafts.

Residents contacted the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries along with other governmental agencies about their crab trap concerns. The agencies said Eden Isles waterways are private property and therefore are not under their jurisdiction. Unwilling to except the Wildlife and Fisheries' position, the issue of jurisdiction was brought to the State Attorney General's office.

The Attorney General's office ruled the Wildlife and Fisheries does not have jurisdiction over commercial crabbing in private waterways, however, property owners may have a civil cause of action for trespassing against crabbers who have placed crab traps in the canal without authorization. The crabbers were given notice they were trespassing and removed their traps.

Eden Isles Events Held in 2014:
Krewe of Bilge Mardi Gras Boat Parade
HOA Annual Crawfish Boil
HOA Children's Event
HOA Night Out Against Crime
HOA Annual Hawaiian Luau
HOA Community Garage Sale
HOA Christmas Party
PYMC Christmas Boat Parade

2015

Levee Board Protection Plan Request - The St. Tammany Levee Board requested the Louisiana Coastal Protection & Restoration Authority (CPRA) to incorporate a "Feasibility Study" into their 2017 Master Plan to develop a protection plan for the community south of Slidell. The CPRA denied the Levee Board's request, because the deadline for plan submittals was November 2014, which was a month before the Levee Board held their first meeting.

Crawfish Boil Canceled Due to Dispute with Parish Litter Enforcement – Parish Litter Enforcement officers confiscated all signs in public spaces, not authorized by the Parish, including the HOA's annual Crawfish Boil sign. Without the ability to notify residents of the Crawfish Boil, the event had to be cancelled. After several weeks of meeting with the Parish's Legal Department, the issue was resolved and the Parish recognized the HOA's right to place community service notices on its public spaces. (Eden Isles June News Letter)

Eden Isles Events Held in 2015:

Krewe of Bilge Mardi Gras Boat Parade
HOA 5K race
HOA Ice Cream Socials
HOA Children's Event
HOA Family Movie Night on the Green Space
HOA Community Garage
HOA Night Out Against Crime
HOA Hawaiian Luau
HOA Christmas Party
PYMC Christmas Boat Parade

2016

Major Milestone For Eden Isles Storm Surge Protection – Initially the Coastal Protection & Restoration Authority (CPRA) had accepted the Parish's position that a levee system along the southern border of the Parish is not practical or feasible, and the only way to protect structures is through elevation or buyouts. (See Parish's 2014, submittal to the CPRA for its 2017 Master Plan above). However, due to the persistent lobbing effort by the Moonraker Civic Organization in conjunction with the East St. Tammany Storm Protection Committee, the CPRA recognized that buying out or elevating over 3,000 homes and businesses and displacing over 7,000 residents may not be the most cost effective method of storm surge protection. The CPRA agreed to reevaluate the feasibility of extending the Slidell levee protection to Eden Isles.

Instead of revising their 2017 Master Plan's position in support of buyouts or elevation, the CPRA directed the Parish, in conjunction with the Levee Board, to study and develop options to extend south Slidell's surge protection system to include Eden Isles. -The CPRA reallocated $2 million previously approved for the Slidell Levee project and redirected it to fund the study. This CPRA directive was subsequently revised to conduct a comprehensive Reconnaissance Study of the entire St. Tammany Levee Board's District.

Short-Term Rentals In Eden Isles – As short-term rental properties begin showing up in Eden Isles, residents contact their Parish Council Representative to establish regulations/ordinances for the short-term rental industry. Residents believe short-term property rentals, within a single-family residential community, degrades the quality of single-family residential life, by introducing an influx of strangers without knowledge of appropriate and acceptable behavior within the local communities. The influx of out-of-town tourist into residential communities will increase problems with traffic flow, litter, noise, crime and many other quality of life issues now taking place within Orleans and Jefferson Parishes as a result of unregulated short-term property rentals. The Parish Government advised they will look into the issue. (See Parish Council short-term rental restrictions in 2021)

Us Highway 11 Widening Public Hearing - The Regional Planning Commission (RPC) and the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) held a public hearing to discuss the results of the US Highway 11 (US 11) Widening Environmental Assessment (EA). The project scope was scaled down from a four-lane road to a two-lane road with turning lanes (See original design in 2009, above). The environmental assessment did not include any study associated with flooding caused by elevating the highway to incorporate it into the Slidell Levee. The environmental assessment assumed the levee across the highway already existed, even thought it would not be built for another year. (Reference: State Project No. H.004983 - Federal Aid Project No. H004983)

US HIGHWAY 11
SPARTAN DRIVE TO LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN

The Louisiana Department of Transportation (DOTD) and the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) propose increasing capacity and decreasing congestion along US 11 (Pontchartrain Drive), from Lake Pontchartrain to Spartan Drive, in Slidell, Louisiana. When completed, US 11 would consist of two 12-foot-wide travel lanes, 10-foot-wide paved shoulders, curbs and gutters, and bicycle facilities. The travel lanes would be separated by a combination of raised medians with J-turns, and new access management features would be constructed at intersections to facilitate traffic flow.

At the Oak Harbor Boulevard intersection a yield-controlled J-turn would be constructed with a dedicated left turn lane in the southbound direction and right turn lane for westbound traffic. At Eden Isles Drive and Carr Drive, existing intersections would be converted to three-legged roundabouts. The Northshore Circle intersection would allow left-in and right-out turns, a J-turn from the north, and a U-turn sized for passenger vehicles. The intersection at Lakeview Drive would allow right-in and right-out turns, with no access from the north.

All modifications would be located within existing right-of-way (ROW), and no additional ROW would be required.

WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE

This open house public hearing is designed to provide you the opportunity to learn more about the US 11 Project and to provide input to our project team. From our experience with events like tonight's, we have learned the open house format is the most conducive to meaningful interaction between the public and project team. We hope you agree.

WE WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK

Be sure to view the narrated presentation and other exhibits tonight. Project team members look forward to discussing the project with you and answering your questions. Have a comment regarding the project? Comment cards are located throughout the cafeteria. Please complete a card and place it at any of the information or welcome tables. You can also comment by mail (G.E.C., Inc., Attn: Jeff Robinson, P.E., 8282 Goodwood Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70806). Comments should be postmarked no later than July 5, 2016.

YOUR PROJECT TEAM

G.E.C., Inc., is a Louisiana engineering and planning firm with offices in Mandeville, Metairie, and Baton Rouge. We are proud to have been selected for this project and greatly appreciate the opportunity to contribute to our local community.

2017

Moonraker Civic Association Organizes A Storm Surge Protection Meeting - President of the Moonraker Civic Association, met with US Congressman Steve Scalise's Chief of Staff to discuss what measures can be taken to ensure and expedite storm surge protection for the south Slidell community. As a result, Congressman Scalise's office held a meeting with the Corps of Engineers, the CPRA, Parish representatives, St. Tammany Levee Board, the East St. Tammany Storm Protection Committee, and the Presidents of the HOAs impacted by the south Slidell levee to discuss surge protection for the south Slidell community. The meeting highlighted the critical need for storm surge protection and demonstrated the community's involvement in working towards a solution to mitigate the damage caused by the South Slidell levee. This was the first time all the players have come together to discuss the community's surge protection needs.

The South Slidell Levee Is Extended Across Highway 11 – The south Slidell levee is extended across Highway 11, despite repeated request to first perform an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) to determine impact the levee will have on Eden Isles. The Department of Transportation and Development said they can build the levee without an EIS, because they are not identifying the work as a levee project; instead they have identified the project as a road improvement, with the assumption that the levee was already in place before their work started, which of course is not true.

The estimated cost of Highway 11 levee construction is $4,932,811. This cost did not include other cost associated with the project such as elevating Oak Harbor Drive for $986,790.

2018

Freedom of Information Request (FOIA) Submitted to the Corps of Engineers – In 2013, the Eden Isles Flood Committee requested the Corps correct their Environmental Impact Study of south shore hurricane structures (See 2013 Corps Challenge above). The Corps agreed to release their corrected study by November 2013, but later refused to release the study.

A FOIA was submitted requesting release of the study. The Corps refused the FOIA request. An appeal was made and the Corps study was finally released in August of 2018. The study evaluated the cumulative impact of all risk reduction structures built after Hurricane Betsy, by comparing 1965 models with 2012 models. The study once again showed south shore barriers built by the Corps had no impact on the north shore. After studying, the criteria used to develop the 1965 models several significant errors were found. The modeling errors were submitted to the Corps and in 2019 the Corps agreed to revise their models and re-do their study findings. The Corps would not provide a release date for the corrected study.

Parish Government Looks Into Short-Term Rental Issue – Parish Government responds to public complaints about short-term in residential neighborhoods (see Short-Term Rentals in Eden Isles 2016 above). Parish Councilman Steve Stefancik said short-term rentals are located all over the parish, but waterfront properties seem to be especially popular. Stefancik said St. Tammany officials have looked at laws in New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Chicago, Denver and even Spain for ideas. A parish ordinance is being crafted (New Orleans Advocate July 3, 2018).

Clipper Dr. Bridge Is Replaced - After constant demands by the Moonraker Civic Association, St. Tammany Parish began the project to replace the structurally deficient and deteriorating bridge that provides the only access to Moonraker and Clipper Estates. Construction problems caused many delays the bridge replacement took over a year to complete, frustrating many residents.

and

Eden Isles Events Held in 2018:

Krewe of Bilge Mardi Gras Boat Parade
HOA Crawfish Boil
HOA Community Garage Sale
HOA Night Out Against Crime
HOA Christmas Party
PMYC Christmas Boat Parade

2019

Highway 11 Bridge Closed - The 91-year-old drawbridge was the first vehicle bridge to cross Lake Pontchartrain. It survived Hurricane Katrina and became the primary link between Slidell and New Orleans. In November 2018, the bridge was closed and the $28.36 million project to make concrete and structural repairs, grid deck replacement, painting, installation of a new fender system, and the rehabilitation of electrical and mechanical systems on the two draw bridges began.

The original estimated closure time was four months, but unexpected issues developed, and the bridge remained closed and will not open until late summer 2020. The official detoured route for vehicular traffic is LA 433 (Old Spanish Trail) to I-10, but motorist prefer to take a shortcut through Eden Isle Drive. The extended bridge closure greatly increased traffic on Eden Isles Drive, raising safety concerns due to speeding and heavy truck traffic.

Commercial Crabbers Once Again Cause Boating Hazard In Waterways - The St. Tammany Parish Sheriff's Marine Division was notified of "commercial" crabbers once again placing traps in the Eden Isles waterways without obtaining the owner's permission. Acting upon resident complaints, and in accordance with the Louisiana State Attorney's Office's ruling (see 2014 discussion above), the Sheriff's Department had the commercial crab traps removed from the private waterways.

Corps of Engineers To Perform A Feasibility Study Of Flood Control Projects In St Tammany Parish – (September 17, 2019, the Times Picayune) – The Corps announced it will conduct a flood control study for St Tammany Parish using their "3 – 3 – 3 plan". The study has a $3 million budget, will take 3 years to complete and be reviewed by 3 boards. The Corps' funding announcement came just as the existing St Tammany $2 million comprehensive Reconnaissance Study had completed it Task 2, Gap Analysis, and was ready to propose a protection plan and begin the Task 3, Project Feasibility Analysis (see 2016 above)

It is not clear how the Corps' study will affect the Reconnaissance Study. Will the Corps' accept the data, findings and recommendations of the Reconnaissance Study and build upon it or start over from the beginning? How long will the Corps' involvement delay the implementation of a surge protection for Eden Isle? It is unfortunate that the Corps' study was not begun immediately after Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

Eden Isles Archives

Eden Isles HOA Meets With Parish About Street Drainage - The Parish Department of Public Works damaged the drainage system on seven Eden Isles streets by filled in the drainage gutters with asphalt.

This created safety hazards by:
- Eliminating the reservoir capacity of the gutter, reducing flow volume
- Eliminating the clear smooth drainage channel to the catch basins
- Increasing the time it takes water to reach drainage catch basins
- Increasing the amount of time standing water remains on the streets

This also forces drainage water and street debris on to people's property.

The meeting with the Department of Public Works resulted in an agreement to develop criteria to remove asphalt from the drainage gutters and catch basins on the damaged streets. Gretel Cove was selected as the first street to be restored. The bid procedure should begin late summer, and other streets drainage restoration will follow depending upon the cost of the restoration and funding availability.

In addition, the Department of Public Works agreed to stop fill in our drainage gutters with asphalt when overlaying our streets.

An Eden Isles Fishing Club Is Established – It is strange than no one has thought of this before. A discussion about fishing on the website "NextDoor" evolved into a group that meets once a month to swap lies about their fishing adventures. They socialize, exchange contact information, and fishing tips, then team up and take fishing trips together. Everyone is welcome regardless of skill level.

Parish Government Struggles With Short-Term Rental Issue – St. Tammany Parish Zoning Commission sends short-term rentals ordinance back to the St. Tammany Parish Council without voting on it saying there are numerous problems with the ordinance and they do not have the expertise to resolve them. The commissioners recommended that the council retain outside experts to help with the wording of the ordinance (NOLA.com, July 3, 2019). Councilman Lorino asked for a workgroup to address the many issues regarding short-term rentals. The workgroup will include not only Council members but also concerned citizens on both sides of the issue. (See Short-Term Rentals 2016 & 2018 above & 2021 below).

Interstate 10 Ramps At Oak Harbor Are Elevated – After Interstate 10, access ramps were flooded during Hurricane Isaac, funding was allocated to elevate the ramps. The elevation project will reduce ramp flooding during storms and allow access to the interstate (See 2012, Hurricane Isaac above).

Eden Isles Dr. Undergoes A Major Repair Project – After Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Eden Isle Drive became the primary detour road, when the Interstate 10 twin-span bridge was washed away and traffic was diverted to the Highway 11 Bridge. The heavy detour traffic damaged the roadbed and required constant repairs. The Parish decided to make substantial repairs and rebuilt Eden Isles Drive from the subsurface up including curb and drainage basin repairs. Marina Drive and Southern Star also received asphalt overlays. http://www.stpgov.org/residents/news/item/4259-2-1-million-multi-road-and-drainage-improvement-project-begins-in-slidell-area

The Bonnet Carre Spillway Opened Twice In One Year - This was the first time in history that the Spillway had been opened two times in the same year in order to protect New Orleans from flooding. The fresh water diversion through Lake Pontchartrain into the Gulf cause significant environmental issues within the lake.

Eden Isles Events Held In 2019:
Krewe of Bilge Mardi Gras Boat Parade
HOA Garage Sale
HOA Ice Cream Socials
HOA Luau
HOA Driveway block parties
HOA Plant Swap
HOA Night Out Against Crime
PMYC Christmas Parade

2020

Eden Isles' Sewer And Water System Was Purchased By The Magnolia Water Utility Operating Company.

Corps of Engineers Revised Their Report On How South Shore Structures Affect Eden Isles - In response to errors noted in the Corps' 2018 report of south shore structures affect on Eden Isles (see previous 2018 Eden Isles history) the Corps revised the data used in their models and revised their report, but once again errors still existed. The Eden Isles Flood Control Committee informed the Corps of the error and the Corps revised their impact study once again.

Corps made additional correction to their study of south shore structures affect on Eden Isles and determined that their structures increase Eden Isles' storm surge by approximately 5".

The U. S. Army Corps Of Engineers Held A Public Meeting On Their St. Tammany Flood Protection Feasibility Study - The Corps explained their "3 by 3 by 3" study format, which is:
The Corps has $3 million to perform a 3 year study that will go through 3 layers of oversight.
The study has the following schedule milestones:
April 2020* - Alternatives Milestone
March 2021* - Release of Draft Feasibility Report for Public Review
January 2023 - Chief's Report Millstone
*Public Input

Residents shared their concerns over:

1. Affordable flood insurance concerns
2. Frequency of street, property and home flooding
3. Living in fear during each hurricane season
4. Concern over property values
5. Concern over sea level rise
6. Concern over levees built around Eden Isles that have increase the flood risk

The Corps was impressed by the turnout and the strong public support for surge protection for Eden Isles.

Eden Isles Archives

The St. Tammany Parish Coastal Protection Study is Completed - The Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA), the St Tammany Parish Government and the St Tammany Levee Drainage and Conservation District completed their St. Tammany Parish Coastal Protection Study. The study developed a comprehensive coastal protection plan that will provide flood risk reduction for the Parish's coastal zone communities including an Eden Isles protection plan.

Coordination meetings between the Corps of Engineers, the Levee Board, CPRA and Parish were held in an attempt to expedite the Corps' storm surge protection study. The existing St Tammany $2 million comprehensive Reconnaissance Study was presented to the Corps for their consideration.

Worldwide COVID-19 Virus Pandemic Hits - Schools, bars and restaurants were closed, basic items were no longer available, sporting events and festivals were canceled, international travel was restricted and hospitals were overwhelmed. People were told to self-quarantine, social distance, work from home and wear masks.

Eden Isles neighbors pulled together to offer help to the elderly and those in need of necessary items. During the nation wide stay at home quarantine Eden Isles residents were able to social distance while enjoying the benefits of living on the water by boating, kayaking, swimming or simply fishing off their dock. In addition, neighbors held free movie and concert nights, where movie screens and bands were setup in their back yards and played to an audience of boaters anchored in the waterways.

Eden Isles Archives

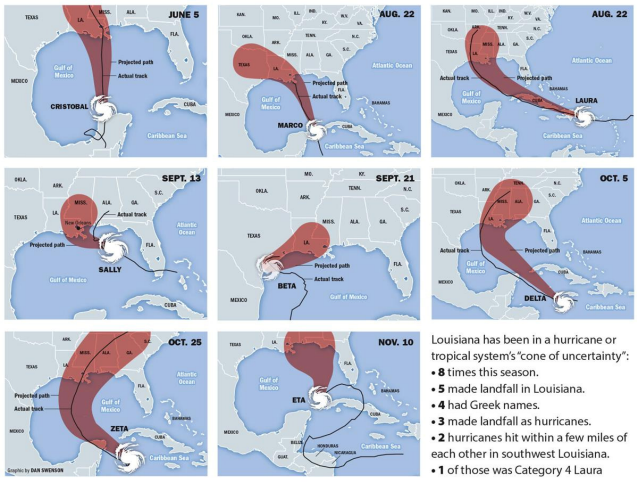
The U. S. Army Corps Of Engineers Held A Virtual Public Meeting (Due To COVID-19 Gathering Restrictions) **On The Status Of Their St. Tammany Flood Protection Feasibility Study**– The Corps identified nine St. Tammany Parish projects they will evaluate for further study. An Eden Isles protection plan was one of the projects selected for study. In January 2021, the Corps is scheduled to announce which study projects will undergo a detailed risk reduction plan.

A Barge And Excavator Sinks Underneath Eden Isles, Highway 11 Bridge: While navigating under the Eden Isles Dr. bridge, a large backhoe excavator broke loose from its barge, overturned and sank below the bridge. The bridge was inspected and no damage to the bridge was found.

The owner of the backhoe was on the barge and was critically injured. He was airlifted to the hospital, but did not survive. It is not known when the backhoe excavator will be salvaged.

Boaters should use caution when traveling under the bridge.

2020 Hurricane Season: a record-breaking 30 named storms - Eden Isles was in the "Cone of Uncertainty" eight times, but fortunately only experienced the impact of Hurricane "Zeta", a late October, category 2 hurricane that passed over Eden Isles. Zeta's storm surge was only about five feet and did not flood homes; however, it did cause minor roof damage to many homes.



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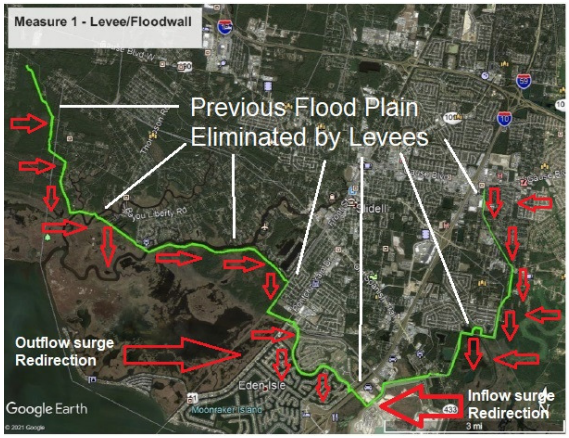
Eden Isles Events Held In 2020:

Krewe of Bilge Mardi Gras Boat Parade
HOA Garage Sale
HOA Ice Cream Socials
HOA Night Out Against Crime
PMYC Christmas Parade
Other events were canceled due to COVID-19 gathering restrictions

2021



The Corps Of Engineers Release Their $4 Billion Flood Protection Plan For St. Tammany Parish - The Corps of Engineers proposed building a levee 19 feet high from Lacombe to Hwy. 190 leaving communities below and east of Slidell without levee protection. This levee, along with the existing Slidell levee and the south shore barriers, will increase storm surge making Eden Isles and communities south and east of Slidell at greater risk of storm surge.

The Corps determined 100-year (19') levee protection system for Eden Isles was not feasible. The Corps recommended 50-year protection, by elevating only 400 homes in Eden Isles that are below the 50-year flood elevation of +10', all other structures will receive no flood protection. The Corps did not evaluate the cost of a comprehensive 50-year (10') levee system. The Corps' findings were based on nonspecific modeling and outdated elevation surveys; more recent surveys indicate at lease 1,800 homes within Eden Isles are below the 50-year flood elevation of +10'.
https://www.nola.com/news/northshore/article_be9e08a8-d453-11eb-a454-030e555774d3.html

The St. Tammany Levee Board challenged the Corps' findings and requested the Corps adopt the St. Tammany Levee Board's plan to build a 50-year protection levee for comprehensive protection to everyone within the Eden Isles community (Eden Isles, Oak Harbor, Clipper Estates, Moonraker and Lakeview Dr.).
https://www.nola.com/news/northshore/article_a12e1df2-fa0b-11eb-a2fe-dba7747ee81d.html

The Louisiana Coastal Protection And Restoration Authority (CPRA) Approves Surge Protection Plan For The Eden Isles Community - Without waiting on the Corps of Engineers to finish their three year study, the CPRA verbally committed to go forward with the Levee Board's plan for the Eden Isles community. Design funding will be through the CPRA and implemented by the St. Tammany Levee Board.

The plan for the Eden Isles community (Eden Isles, Oak Harbor, Clipper Estates, Moonraker and Lakeview Dr.), will provide comprehensive structural protection in the form of a floodgate with a pumping station at the entrance of the marina, elevating Hwy.11 and Lakeview Dr., a rock breakwater beginning at Interstate 10 and extending to Bayou Liberty as additional funding becomes available. The plan will provide 50-year protection for infrastructure and all homes and businesses within the Eden Isles community. The plan also provides comprehensive flood protection for other communities left out of the Corps' plan. The plan has support from our local, state and federal political leaders.

The CPRA will provide design funding. Construction funding will be provided by GOMASA funds, Capital outlay funds, Watershed program funds, and the CPRA. Construction of the State's protection plan could begin within the next 5 years, well ahead of the federal plan. However, the project will not go forward unless residents within the Levee Board's district approve a 5 Mil property tax to pay for maintaining the protection system.

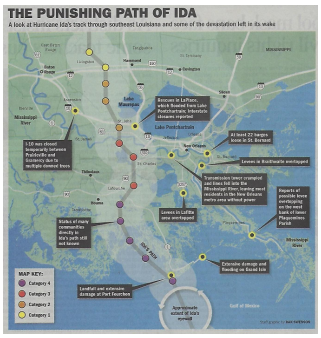
Eden Isles Archives

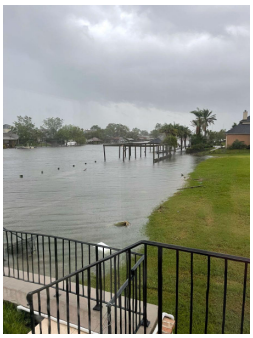
St. Tammany Parish Council Passes Short-Term Rental Restrictions - The Parish council unanimously passed a new ordinance (2021-2348-ZC) to take effect February 1, 2022 that specifies how, when, and where short term rentals would be allowable and further specified permit fees and fines for violations, etc.

The ordinance only allows short-term rentals in mixed-use and commercially zoned areas. Owners of short-term rentals will have to apply for a permit, pay an annual $750 fee and will be subject to parish hotel-motel taxes. The fees will be used to hire additional code enforcement personnel.

https://www.nola.com/news/northshore/article_870fdc18-e0d8-11eb-9ba6-2b3e662e81ce.html

Hurricane Ida Stays West Of Lake Pontchartrain - On the 16th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina (August 2005), Hurricane Ida stays west of the Mississippi River and Lake Pontchartrain reducing the storm surge impact to Eden Isles to only 6 ½ feet. The impact to Eden Isles was loss of electricity for five days, street flooding for two days, roof damage, loss of the entrance sign at Highway 11, and trees blown over.





State Voters Reject Levee Board Funding - Before 2006, all levee board districts automatically had the authority to assess up to 5 mils to maintain their flood structures. Levee Districts created after 2006 now must receive voter approval to receive a millage. The St. Tammany Levee District was created after 2006, therefore it must receive voter approval for a millage.

There are five other levee districts, within Louisiana without a funding source and the state proposed an Amendment to the State Constitution extending millage authority to all state levee districts created after 2006. The statewide Amendment, on the November ballot, failed.

Without a dedicated funding source, the state or the Corps will not fund hurricane protection for St. Tammany Parish. The St. Tammany Levee Board plans on re-introducing the millage request on a local district ballot in order to go forward with a hurricane protection for St. Tammany Parish.

Peninsula Pacific Entertainment (P2E) Wish To Build A $325 Million Casino - The proposed development would be built across the Interstate from Eden Isles, next to the Lakeshore marina. P2E bought the property in February for about $14 million and spent $5 million on a campaign to convince voters to approve the casino.

Proponents of the casino said the project would be an economic bonanza for the parish bringing in jobs and tax revenue, and diverting some of the estimated $380 million that Louisianans spend each year at Mississippi casinos.

Opponents of the casino of the project were concerned that crime would increase, local businesses would loose customers and the casino's outdoor amphitheater would generate noise pollution within the single-family residential communities surrounding the amphitheater.

On December 11, a parish wide election was held and 63% of the voters rejected to casino.

https://www.nola.com/news/northshore/article_852289c6-5920-11ec-b6a0-63433d4564ef.html

Eden Isles Events Held In 2021:

Krewe of Bilge Mardi Gras Boat Parade
HOA Garage Sale
HOA Ice Cream Socials
HOA Night Out Against Crime
PMYC Christmas Parade
Other events were canceled due to COVID-19 gathering restrictions

2022

Magnolia Water Company Shocks Residents With Water & Sewerage Bills – In addition to poor water quality, sewer & water rates 300% to 500% higher than previous bills. The rate increase was approved by our Public Service Commission, Eric Skemetta, residents were unable meet with Commissioner Skemetta, instead he provided the documentation associated with Magnolia's rate request and the Public Service Board's approval documents. (see 2020)

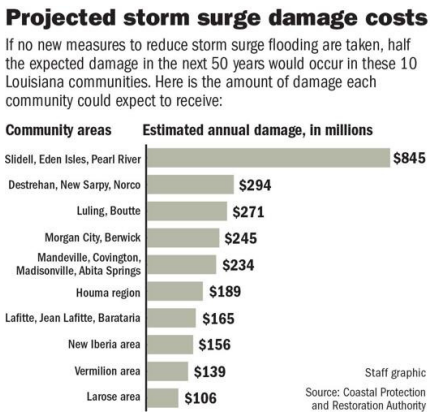
Highway 11 Bridge Reopens - The U.S. Highway 11 Bridge finally reopens on March 31, 2022 after being closed for over three years. The bridge's $28.4 million renovation rerouted traffic between Highway 11 and Interstate 10 through Eden Isles Drive causing significant traffic issues on Eden Isles Drive. (see 2019)

U. S. Army Corps of Engineers Extends Feasibility Study Timeline - The U.S. Corps of Engineers extended its three-year St. Tammany flood protection Feasibility Study by eighteen months in order to address concerns raised by the St. Tammany Levee Board over the study's preliminary findings and recommendations. The Corp's recommended elevating Eden Isles homes rather than providing comprehensive 50-year structural protection for Eden Isles. In addition, the Corp's plan to extend the Slidell levee to Lacombe will increase Eden Isles flood risk. The Cops is scheduled to have a public meeting in 2023 to respond to the concerns raised by the Levee Board. (see June 2021)

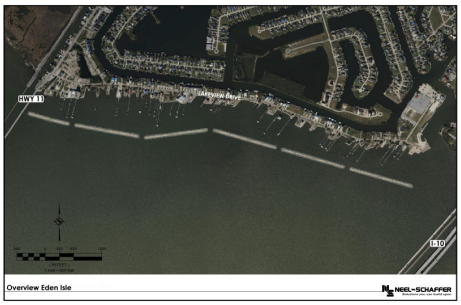
New FEMA 2.0 Flood Insurance Rates Take Effect As New Policies Are Written And Existing Policies Are Renewed. A great amount of uncertainty and confusion surrounds the new rating system, because FEMA has refused to provide the data used to establish its new rates. Existing policy owner rates will increase by 18% each year until the full rate cost is reached, new policy owners will pay the full cost immediately. The new FEMA 2.0 flood insurance rates have affected home sales and home values.

Eden Isles Archives

Eden Isles Tops The List Of Projected Storm Surge Damage Cost – A Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) study concluded that southeast St. Tammany Parish has the greatest financial risk (future without action risk) than any other area in the state of Louisiana! Based upon this study, the CPRA has give southeast St. Tammany priority in their storm surge protection plans.



Eden Isles Surge Protection Breakwater Design Scheduled To Begin - St. Tammany Parish Government allocated $8 million in Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA) funding. The first phase will provide coastal protection and habitat to the Eden Isles shoreline from the Interstate bridge to the Highway 11 bridge. As additional funds become available, the breakwater will extend west to protect Carr Dr. and east to protect Lakeshore Estates.



A breakwater protection project was proposed in 2010, but did not receive local and state political support until St. Tammany Levee Board and the new parish administration made it a priority. (see 2011)

Design to begin in 2023, and construction in 2024, pending Corps of Engineers permit approvals.

New Hwy. 11 Eden Isles Entrance Structure Replaces the Structure Destroyed By Hurricane Ida

Eden Isles Tide Gauge Is Approved – An agreement has been reached between the St. Tammany Levee Board and Parish Government to install a tide gauge at Eden Isles. The gauge will provide accurate real-time tide information to improve storm surge modeling data needed in order to measure Lake Pontchartrain outflow surge.

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The Regional Planning Commission (RPC) Asked The U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers To Revaluate The Lake Pontchartrain Barrier Plan – The RPC unanimously approved a resolution, requesting federal authorization and funding for the Lake Pontchartrain barrier project's reevaluation.

The Corps first proposed structural barriers at the Rigolets and Chef Menteur passes to block storm surge from entering Lake Pontchartrain over 50 years ago. The plan did not go forward because, the Corps' Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was written so poorly it failed to meet federal standards and the Corps was told correct and resubmit the EIS in order to proceed. The Corps chose not to correct their EIS, abandoned their structural barriers plan, and refused to reconsider it.

The RPC resolution came after the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) released their study concluded that southeast St. Tammany Parish has the greatest financial risk than any other area in the state of Louisiana.

Eden Isles Events Held In 2022:

Krewe of Bilge Mardi Gras Boat Parade
HOA Garage Sale
PMYC Christmas Parade