

We've Come A Long Way!

(May 2, 2015)



On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina, the worst natural disaster ever to hit the United States, left devastation all along the gulf coast from Alabama to Texas and 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 few residents that did not evacuate tell a story of feeling relief as the hurricane passed over without flooding. But, as Katrina moved further north and the winds shifted to the east, all the surge that had built up on the west edge of Lake Pontchartrain quickly shifted to the east sending a massive 16' tsunami directly into Eden Isles.

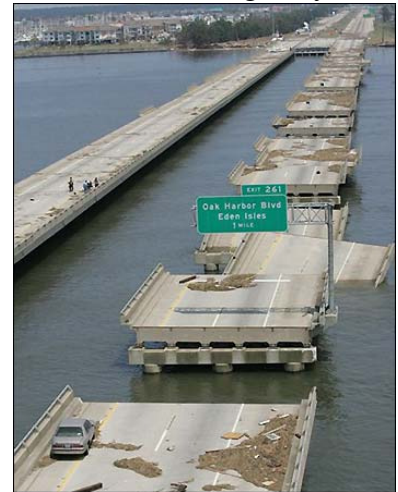
The destruction was devastating. Every home was flooded. Debris slicks covered our waterways. Boats broke loose from their moorings and floated into homes.



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.

Unlike New Orleans 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 or weeks. This allowed Eden Isles residents to return almost immediately and begin cleaning up.

Eden Isles lead the recovery effort despite shortages of building materials and construction workers. Neighbors pulled together and within a year most of the homes in Eden Isles were repaired and the Eden Isles Homeowners Association worked with the Parish, state and FEMA to expedite the cleanup operation.



Over the last ten years the residents of Eden Isles and the Homeowners Association have worked very hard to rebuild and improve our island's infrastructure and quality of life. The Eden Isles Flood Control Committee was established and numerous meetings were held with local, parish, state and federal agencies to develop a protection plan for our community.

The Eden Isles Flood Control Committee organized the parish wide Corps of Engineers public meeting held on June 16, 2009, to publicize the need for a comprehensive barrier protection system. A standing room only crowd of over 1,000 people showed up at the Harbor Center. This huge turnout got the attention of local and state officials and they began to actively support the need for a comprehensive Lake basin surge protection system.

Thanks to our efforts and the strong support of Senator A.G. Crowe and Representative Cromer, the Coastal Protection & Restoration Authority (CPRA) recognized the need for structures to keep surge out of the Lake basin and in 2012 authorized a study to develop this comprehensive protection plan and put it into the state's Master Plan.



Hope For The Future

The CPRA has released a study documenting that low level, over topping structures will significantly reduce storm surge flooding within the Lake basin without adversely impacting Mississippi.

[PMSC2c PontchartrainBarrierStudiesUpdate Leadon&Belhadjali.pdf](#)

The CPRA's study is a significant step towards Lake protection, but it will take many years before it will develop into a plan and ultimately into a completed project.

Therefore, in 2014, the Eden Isles Flood Committee reached out to Lakeview, Clipper and Oak Harbor and formed the East St. Tammany Storm Protection Committee (ESTSPC) to develop a localized protection plan that can be implemented much quicker than the state's comprehensive plan. This new coalition now represents all 7,000 residents living south of Slidell, between highway 11 and I-10.

The ESTSPC has solidified a larger, stronger, united voice for storm surge protection, and has also been active in the establishment of the new ST. Tammany Levee Board. The ESTSPC developed a localized storm surge protection plan utilizing existing structures that is both feasible and has a positive cost benefit ratio. This plan has been presented to parish, state and community groups and has been well received by all. In addition this plan has been incorporated into the St. Tammany Parish Hazard Mitigation and the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation's list of protection plans.



With your support, the Eden Isles Homeowners Association will continue to work towards providing storm surge protection for our community and look forward to day when Eden Isles receives the storm surge protection it deserves.

The proposed East St. Tammany Storm Protection Plan may be found on the Eden Isles website under "Publications".

The St. Tammany Parish Hazard Mitigation Plan has been posted on the parish website and it includes the Eden Isles protection plan (Project 1.2.8 on page 4-9).

<http://www.stpgov.org/departments/homeland-security-emergency-preparedness>

The Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation (LPBF) has begun a program to study Lake Basin protection, which is bringing much needed exposure to the issue, and the Eden Isles protection plan has been added to their project inventory. [PMSC2b ProjectInventoryUpdate Boyd.pdf](#)

As more official organizations and agencies recognize the Eden Isles protection plan, the more exposure and credibility our issue receives and the harder it will be for the local, parish, state and federal authorities to ignore the need to provide protection to the Eden Isles area! (Rev. 5-4-15)