

Stormwater Retention on Hazard Mitigation Sites

Recently, fruit trees have been planted on Parish owned properties purchased through FEMA buyouts after storm events. Other properties have been planted with shrubs and trees that are good for bird habitat and food. All of these plantings should also reduce flooding in the immediate area.

Using the National Tree Benefit Calculator to look up the species planted, or one closely related, the 140 trees may take up 473,970 gallons of water over 10 years. This assumes that the trees are 1" in diameter now and will grow to 6" by year 10. Assuming they grow to 10 inches over 30 years, they would take up 3 million gallons of water. That is enough to cover 10 acres one foot deep in water.



When the Parish purchases homes with FEMA funds, the properties must remain in open space use permanently. The Parish has few options for transferring ownership of the land. This project will make use of these properties as productive community gardens and stormwater sinks.

Properties that used to be sources of runoff from homes, slabs, driveways and patios will now take up water. Water will be used by the fruit trees, and the root system will stabilize the soils if the land is flooded.

The fruit will be available to anyone in the community. They will be able to go on site and pick it. The nonprofits, youth groups, or churches may opt to pick the fruit for local schools or food banks in the future.



Thanks to UPS for planting and funding this venture, Keep Terrebonne Beautiful for getting the funding and coordinating efforts, and Bayou Grace, BTNEP, Sowing Seeds, Wetland Warriors, the South Louisiana Wetland Discovery Center, and all others who took their time and energy to plant.