**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** (uppercase and bold)

Sept. 17, 2020 (use correct date)

Contact Marvin McGraw (replace with your name), marvin.mcgraw@la.gov (replace with your email)

**STATE TO BEGIN FUNDING FLOOD MITIGATION PRIORITIES WITH**

**$1.2 BILLION LINE OF CREDIT**

(uppercase, bold, center justify)

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development signed a grant agreement with the state today, establishing a $1.2 billion line of credit in Community Development Block Grant Mitigation funds. This agreement means the state can begin funding vital flood protection efforts throughout the state consistent with the state’s Action Plan that HUD approved Feb. 20. (who, what, when, where) (left justify)

“This agreement marks a major milestone in our mission to create a more resilient Louisiana, which is especially relevant given the severe storm impacts from Hurricane Laura,” Gov. John Bel Edwards said. “Since the devastating 2016 floods, we have worked diligently to build a statewide framework for reducing flood risk, which we have now with the Louisiana Watershed Initiative. We are prepared to begin spending these long-awaited funds on programs and projects that address some of our state’s most immediate flood mitigation priorities, as well as provide us the tools we need for a more resilient future.” (quote from source)

The state’s Action Plan for the $1.2 billion grant details its approach to spending the funds on projects, data collection, watershed modeling and policy measures that align with the Louisiana Watershed Initiative's long-term resilience objectives. It includes an initial $100 million funding opportunity for local and regional projects that are implementation-ready and will address immediate flood mitigation needs throughout Louisiana. The state and its watershed regions will select and award funding for these projects this winter. (how, why)

In addition to allocating $100 million for implementation-ready flood mitigation projects, the state recently initiated comprehensive statewide watershed modeling efforts and is working with local and regional partners to develop flood risk reduction strategies specific to each of the state’s watershed regions. (background)

For more information, visit the [LWI](https://www.watershed.la.gov/) website or email watershed@la.gov. (for more information)

**About the Louisiana Watershed Initiative** (standard boilerplate)

*Gov. John Bel Edwards established the****Council on Watershed Management****in 2018, which serves as the coordinated, interagency organization at the state level for watershed-based flood risk reduction. The****Louisiana Watershed Initiative****serves as the Council's programmatic arm, under which all related efforts operate.*