

## Rustic Pathways Partnership



Volunteers planting native wetland plants

**Project Year:** 2007

**Category:** Outreach

**Status:** Complete

**Project #:** None

**Location:**

Barataria and Terrebonne Basins

### Project Partners:

Rustic Pathways, LUMCON, EPA, Terrebonne Parish, Grand Isle Port Commission, The Nature Conservancy, the Gulf of Mexico Foundation, Jean Lafitte National Historical Park & Preserve

### Problem Addressed:

The BTNEP Volunteer Program provides a way for visitors and resident to get involved in the preservation of coastal Louisiana by offering volunteers opportunities in wetland plantings, beach cleanups, invasive species removal, and more.

### Problem Description:

For the past three years BTNEP has partnered with Rustic Pathways, an organization that offers service programs to high school students from across the nation. Destinations for Rustic Pathways students include Tanzania, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Burma, and many more.

In the wake of the devastating 2005 hurricane season, Rustic Pathways began organizing service trips to New Orleans to aid in the rebuilding of communities impacted by Hurricane Katrina. BTNEP has teamed up with Rustic Pathways to provide an opportunity for students from around the country to take part in the restoration of Louisiana wetlands while learning why a vibrant coast is critical to the preservation of our ecology, our economy, and our culture.

Participants spend a day of their one to two week-long trip in the wilds of Louisiana. Students repair trails, remove invasive species, clean beaches, and plant wetlands. Each day begins with a lesson on coastal land loss and the national importance of Louisiana's wetlands. Volunteers are urged to return to their homes across the country and share the story of the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary and the need for its long-term preservation, protection, and restoration.



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