**PI-1 – Barataria-Terrebonne Management Conference**

**OBJECTIVES**

1. To provide oversight of CCMP implementation
2. To provide direction to the BTNEP Program Office
3. To ensure that all stakeholders have the opportunity for input into CCMP implementation
4. To facilitate coordinated management of the BTES

**BACKGROUND**

The Barataria- Terrebonne Management Conference (BTMC or Conference), originally convened in 1990 to develop the CCMP, has been the catalyst for producing open and frank discussions about some of the most critical coastal management issues of the nation. Since its inception, the BTMC has made a commitment to fairness and has fostered a spirit of trust and cooperation among its members and the communities it serves. A founding principal of the BTMC has been a consensus-based form of decision-making which has gained the respect and commitment of the members.

The BTNEP successfully brought together a diverse group of stakeholders to draft and revise a CCMP for the estuary. In this process, decisions have been made using the expertise and experience of interdisciplinary groups and multiple stakeholders. As the CCMP is implemented, it is critical that similar mechanisms be employed, which requires that all interests are represented and that coordinated, integrated, common ground decision-making continue.

Estuarine resources are in demand by many different groups, resulting in multiple-user conflicts. It will always be a challenge to set and follow priorities for the estuary that protect not only natural resources, but also the rights of resource users and the lifestyles of the estuary.

At present, there are several large scale planning and restoration efforts underway at the federal, state and local levels which will affect the Barataria-Terrebonne estuarine system. The BTMC will continue to follow and coordinate with these efforts to ensure that all ongoing activities support the goals of the CCMP.

**DESCRIPTION**

The BTMC will continue to bring together a diverse group of stakeholders to ensure an ongoing affirmation and implementation of the shared vision as established in the CCMP. As such, the BTMC will enable a coordinated, estuary-wide approach to funding, planning, and ongoing monitoring of estuary management, providing an important mechanism for making sound decisions and appropriate revisions to the CCMP as need arises. In addition, the BTMC provides a forum for ongoing formal communication and dialogue among private and public interests. Finally, the BTMC will make available the diverse expertise and resources of Conference members and their constituencies in moving the CCMP implementation forward.

The BTMC is not intended to replace or duplicate existing State government. It is not a new agency or authority and it is ***not*** a regulatory body. It provides an opportunity to maintain the ongoing dialogue related to the issues of mutual concern based on the proven structure of the BTMC. The makeup of the BTMC includes diverse representation of estuary interests. The BTMC is made up of between 40 and 50 members, selected to represent the interest of the major stakeholders in the estuary. Some of the major stakeholders to be represented include industry, business and economic development, Federal, State and local governments, academia, environmental and educational organizations, and the general public.

The organizational structure of the BTMC could be refined as it deems necessary. Because of the large size of the BTMC, it is possible that subcommittees will be formed to address specific issues. In order to maintain a broad-based decision-making process as well as encourage widespread involvement, quarterly meetings of the full BTMC will be held, and more frequent meetings of various committees and subcommittees, if necessary. All interested stakeholders, the general public, and media are welcomed and encouraged to attend these meetings.

To facilitate the administrative and fiscal responsibilities associated with CCMP implementations, the Program Office will provide support services as requested by the BTMC. For additional details about this office, please refer to Action Plan titled Barataria-Terrebonne Program Office.

The BTMC adopted operational procedures in 2000. The operational procedures identify the role of the BTMC, BTMC membership, BTMC Officers, Program Director, Staff, and BTMC meetings, conflicts of interest disclosures, media relationships, and the adoption and amendment of procedures.

**LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING ACTION**

The BTMC will be responsible for its own implementation. An executive committee will be selected by the members of the BTMC and may include a Chairman, Co-chair, Secretary, and other necessary positions. Implementation of CCMP Action Plans will be carried out by all of the members of the BTMC with support and coordination provided by the Program Office.

Guidance to the BTMC will be provided by EPA. An EPA representative will attend all full BTMC meetings. Data collected on the BTMC as part of this Action Plan will be reviewed annually by EPA.

Support to the BTMC will be provided by the BTNEP Program Office. Administrative functions related to the BTMC will be carried out by the Program Office as requested by the BTMC.

**TIMELINES AND/OR MILESTONES**

The BTMC will host quarterly meetings for all members. Attendance records will be reviewed annually during the first calendar quarter and request for alternate or replacement members will be made to organizations that have not attended at least two meetings in the previous calendar year. Executive board positions will be for a term of two years beginning on the first day of the calendar year. Elections for executive board positions will be held during the 3rd quarter of the calendar year.

**POSSIBLE RANGE OF COSTS AND SOURCES OF FUNDING**

Participation in BTMC activities including full committee meetings and subcommittee meetings will be covered by existing member organization budgets. The BTMC will be supported by the Program Office staff as outlined by the Action Plan titled Barataria-Terrebonne NEP Program Office.

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

The monitoring strategies are intended to serve as mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of projects implemented under the action plans. These strategies should only be used as a guide, not as a requirement. It must be recognized that the monitoring strategies should not be expensive to implement and that, because all levels of government and much of the private sector currently have severe funding restraints. Performance measure include:

* Four Management Conference (MC) meetings annually.
* Minutes from the quarterly MC meetings.
* Various reports to EPA about BTMC and Program activities

**Possible Data Gathered:**

* Agendas from BTMC meetings
* Presentations from BTMC meetings
* EPA reports as required
* Annual reports to EPA
* Annual reports to State as directed

**Monitoring:**

**Parties responsible**: BTNEP Program Office will be responsible for all reporting parameters

**Timetable for gathering data:** – Annually, quarterly, and/or as requested by EPA, BTMC, and the State

**How data is shared:** – All materials are shared through the web either on the BTNEP.org site or through EPA or State of Louisiana

**Possible data gaps:** **-** The Program Office and/or the BTMC will regularly evaluate data to determine if there are any possible data gaps.

**If additional funding is needed** – Yes, as the Program Office evolves additional funding may be required.