Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program
MC Meeting # 56 Minutes
9:30AM-June 7, 2011
Nicholls State University
Plantation Room, NSU Student Union
Thibodaux, LA

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Roll-Call

Management Conference Members Present:
Herman Waguespack-American Sugarcane League
Archie Chaisson, Jr.-Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District
John Tesvich-Commercial Fisheries
John Clark-Iberville Parish
Jason Smith-Jefferson Parish
Emelise Cormier-LA Dept. of Environmental Quality
Linda Pace-LA Dept. of Natural Resources
Archie Chaisson, III-Lafourche Parish
Dwayne Bourgeois-LA Assoc. of Levee Districts
Tim Allen-Louisiana Landowners Assoc.
Roland Guidry-LA Oil Spill Coordinator's Office
Shannon Lafont-Louisiana Science Teacher's Assoc.
John Conover-LUMCON
Alan Matherne-LSU Ag Center
Gary LaFleur-Nicholls State University
Albertine Kimble-Plaquemine Parish
Al Levron-Terrebonne Parish
Jean Landry-The Nature Conservancy
Susan Hennington-US Army Corp of Engineers
Mark McManus-US Coast Guard
Doug Jacobson-US EPA
Susan Testroet-Bergeron-USGS
Rachel Sweeney-US National Marine Fisheries Service
John Boatman-USDA/NRCS

Organizations not present:
Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana
Coastal Conservation Assoc. of LA
Governor's Office of Coastal Activities
Greater Lafourche Port Commission
LA Dept. of Ag & Forestry
LA Dept. of Culture, Recreation & Tourism
LA Dept. of Economic Development
LA Dept. of Education
LA Dept. of Health & Hospitals
LA Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries
LA Forestry Assoc.
LA Mid-Continent Oil & Gas Assoc.
Louisiana Wildlife Federation
National Park Service
Pointe Coupee Parish
South Central Planning & Development Commission
South Louisiana Economic Council
St. Charles Parish
US Fish & Wildlife Service

Guests:
Mel Landry-NOAA
Nick Matherne-Terrebonne Parish
Jennifer Roberts-Bayouland RC&D
Randolph Joseph-NRCS
Leslie Suazo-Brown & Caldwell

BTNEP Staff:
Kerry St. Pe'
Richard DeMay
Dean Blanchard
Matt Benoit
Sandra Helmuth
Alma Robichaux
Shelley Sparks

B. Reading and Approval of Minutes of the March 23, 2011 meeting
Tim Allen made a motion to dispense of the reading of the March 23, 2011 and to accept them as submitted. Archie Chaisson, Jr. seconded the motion. There was no opposition.

II. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES-Kerry St. Pé

A. Personnel Changes
Mel Landry resigned as Public Involvement Coordinator

Kerry announced that Mel is now employed by NOAA.

B. Presentations/Exhibits/Field Trips
Exxon Tree Planting w/Rustic Pathways
Fish the Reef Rodeo
Bayou Petite Caillou Clean-Up
Fourchon Avian Survey
Paddle Bayou Lafourche
Chauvin Folk Art Festival
Debris Removal in TNC Woods w/Rustic Pathways
Grand Isle Migratory Bird Celebration
Galliano Elementary
Asian Carp Monitoring @ Caenarvon
Grand Isle Bird Survey
Terrebonne Aquatic Clinic
Raceland Upper Middle Elementary Planting on Grand Isle
NSU Biology Class-Presentation on protocol for trash pick up on Paddle Bayou Lafourche
Oil Spill Prevention Presentation to Coastal & Marine Operators Assoc.
Fletcher Community College Presentation
Leadership Lafourche-presentation on volunteer program
NSU Farm construction w/Brophy and Rustic Pathways and Bayou Grace
Kid's Corner @ 5K Run for Excellence
G.I. volunteer event with Americorp & 8th graders from Littleton, CO

C. Media Interviews (As of May 31, 2011)

Abbeville Meridional (Abbeville, LA)
- *"Portion of Grand Isle State Park Beach reopens"*- May 4, 2011

Daily Comet (Thibodaux, LA)
- *"More endangered plants flourish at Nicholls Farm"*-March 8, 2011
- *"Being positive can go just so far"*- March 12, 2011

- *"Community Calendar*: Registration for annual four-day Paddle Bayou Lafourche"- March 17, 2011
- *"Want to paddle Bayou Lafourche*?"- March 17, 2011
- *"What's going on*: Registration has begun for the annual four-day Paddle Bayou Lafourche"- March 18, 2011
- *"Community Calendar*: Registration has begun for the annual four-day Paddle Bayou Lafourche"- March 25, 2011
- *"Want to paddle Bayou Lafourche*?"- March 30, 2011
- *"Community Calendar*: Registration has begun for the annual four-day Paddle Bayou Lafourche"- March 31, 2011
- *"Community Calendar*: Registration has begun for the annual four-day Paddle Bayou Lafourche"- April 1, 2011
- *"Could there be a tanker spill at LOOP?"*- April 4, 2011
- *"What's going on*: The 10th annual four-day Paddle Bayou Lafourche,…."- April 8, 2011
- *"Paddle Bayou Lafourche launches 10th year"*- April 8, 2011
- *"La. Senators push for BP money"*- April 16, 2011
- *"Could flooding restore wetlands*?"-May 18, 2011

The Advocate (Baton Rouge, LA)

- *"Farm preserves native species"*- March 14, 2011
- *"Portion of beach at Grand Isle open again after oil spill clean up"*- May 8, 2011

The Courier (Houma, LA)

- *"More endangered plants flourish at Nicholls Farm"*- March 8, 2011
- *"Community Calendar*: Registration has begun for the annual four-day Paddle Bayou Lafourche"- March 17, 2011
- *"What's going on*: Registration has begun for the annual four-day Paddle Bayou Lafourche"- March 18, 2011
- *"Students get early access to cultural festival"*-March 19, 2011
- *"Want to paddle Bayou Lafourche*?"- March 20, 2011
- *"Community Calendar*: Registration has begun for the annual four-day Paddle Bayou Lafourche"- March 24, 2011
- *"Community Calendar*: Registration has begun for the annual four-day Paddle Bayou Lafourche"- March 25, 2011
- *"Want to paddle Bayou Lafourche*?"- March 30, 2011
- *"Paddling trek offers more than just journey"*- April 1, 2011
- *"Community Calendar*: Registration has begun for the annual four-day Paddle Bayou Lafourche"- April 1, 2011
- *"Could there be a tanker spill at LOOP?"*- April 3, 2011
- *"Paddle Bayou Lafourche kicks off its 10th annual journey"*- April 8, 2011
- *"What's going on*: The 10th annual four-day Paddle Bayou Lafourche,…."- April 8, 2011
- *"La. Senators push for BP money"*- April 16, 2011
- *"Could flooding restore wetlands*?"-May 18, 2011

The Daily Review (Morgan City, LA)

- *"Swamp Stomp Fest this weekend"*- March 16, 2011

The Donaldsonville Chief (Donaldsonville, LA)

- *"Nicholls to celebrate Blessing of the Fleet and Folk Art Festival"*- March 24, 2011

The Gumbo Entertainment (Houma, LA)

- *"Paddle Bayou Lafourche turns 10!"*- April 2011
- *GMC 5K Run and Cajun Food Festival a can't miss"*- April 2011

The Lafourche Gazette (Larose, LA)

- *"Want to paddle Bayou Lafourche? Sign up now!"*- April 3, 2011
- *"Parish officials commemorate Deepwater Horizon tragedy with first Energy Council meeting"*- April 24, 2011
- *"Portion of Grand Isle State Park beach reopens"*- May 8, 2011

The Times-Picayune (New Orleans, LA)

- *"Conservation needs to stay"*- March 20, 2011
- *"Fish, wildlife face great threat"*- April 10, 2011
- *"Budget slashing spares drilling agency"*- April 13, 2011

The Tri-Parish Times (Houma, LA)

- *"Paddle Bayou Lafourche turns 10!"*- April 6, 2011
- *"Proposed parish pipeline provides promise"*- April 27, 2011
- *"Energy Council meets for first time"*- April 27, 2011

Other Interviews:

WWL (New Orleans Radio)-K. St. Pe'-anniversary of BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill
HTV-K. St.Pe' and S. Sparks-impacts of flood on environment and people

D. Meetings

Gerald Ford, BP-G.I. volunteer planting
Iberia Parish CVB-bird calendar
Sponsorship
Steve Hartley, USGS-maps for seabird atlas documents
Migratory Bird Action Plan Team
Upper Terrebonne Watershed Meeting
Restore or Retreat Annual Meeting
CRCL Stewardship Awards Ceremony
Terrebonne Parish CZM
Gary LaFleur, NSU-visit Chauvin Bayouside Garden
To discuss potential educational opportunities
Lafourche Energy Council
Education Action Plan Team Meeting
N. Rabalais & R. Twilley-future of LUMCON
Davis Pond Meeting
Steve Mathies-OCPR
Legislative Fly-In for Re-Write of Lacy Bill
Jeff Nolan, DEQ and Ben Bryant, USFWS-
Oil spill photos and data
NSU Biology Student Poster Competition
Judging
Wetshop Planning Meeting
Masterplan Framework Development Team
LDDH/LDEQ-Lafourche Parish Septic
Systems
Nick Matherne, TPCG-moving sediment for
restoration in Atchafalaya River
Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District
Alex Naquin, Sassafras LA-mini grant
proposal
LUMCON Executive Board Meeting
FDT Natural Process Subgroup Conf. Call
State Parks & Recreation Meeting

E. Projects Initiated

1. "2011 Terrebonne Aquatic Clinic"-A. Robichaux
2. "2011 Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve Wetland Camps"-A. Robichaux
3. "Participation in the 2011 Beach-Nesting Bird Survey of the BTNEP Region"-R. DeMay
4. "CWPPRA Shorts-Video Productions"-M. Landry

III. Schedule Next Meeting Date: Date Suggested is Wednesday, September 7, 2011.

IV. Action Items

FY 2012 Workplan

This draft workplan for fiscal year 2012(October 1, 2011- September 30, 2011), will be submitted to EPA in June. The workplan describes a budget request to EPA for executing 21 contractual projects and several administrative type items. The following projects/administrative items were discussed.

Kerry reminded the MC of how our state and federal budgets have been reduced over the last four years. BTNEP is having to use our federal budget to supplement the state budget therefore having to cut back on the number of projects BTNEP is able to initiate each year.

Project Name	Cost
LUMCON Indirect (10%)	$54,363.64
Rental-Building (Operating Service)	$28,795.00
Travel Funds	$30,000.00
BTNEP Personnel Salary	$88,000.00
BTNEP Personnel Fringe (30%)	$26,400.00
BTNEP Student Worker Funding	$12,000.00
Distribution of BTNEP Info. Materials	$100,000.00
Administration (Supplies)	$20,000.00
Administration (Operating Services)	$25,800.00
BTNEP Mail/WEB/GIS Hosting	$12,000.00
Website support/BTNEP.ORG	$15,000.00
La Fete	$38,000.00
La Fete Supplies	$2,000.00
Paddling Trip	$14,000.00
Paddling Trip (Supplies)	$1,000.00
Layout of the Tidal Graph Calendar	$9,000.00
BTNEP Invasive Species Mini-Grants	$20,000.00
Support of Wetland/Cultural Day NSU Jubilee	$2,500.00
Support of 7th Annual Eagle Expo	$1,500.00
Sparrow Publication-layout	$15,000.00
2013 Bird Calendar-layout	$9,000.00
Colonial Nesting Shorebird Sites on Grand Isle	$21,141.36
Construction of a Water Feature on Grand Isle to Provide Water to Neotropical Migrants	$6,000.00
Birding Trail Signage for Barataria-Terrebonne Basins	$5,000.00
2012 From H-2-O: A Water Quality Workshop for Teachers	$7,500.00
2012 Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve Wetlands Camps	$6,000.00
Bayou French Tent-Educational Component of NSU's Louisiana Swamp Stomp	$2,000.00
2012 Eagle Expo Student Educational Program	$2,500.00
2012 Louisiana Wetland Workshop (WETSHOP)	$7,500.00
BTNEP Residents' Guide to Managing Invasive Species	$5,000.00
2013 Tidal Graph Calendar Storylines-South Louisiana Traditional Wild Game Harvesting Techniques	$6,000.00
Homeowners Guide to Improving Water Quality	$5,000.00
TOTAL FUNDS	**$598,800.00**

John Tesvich stated that it would be helpful if the MC was able to see how these different catagories were funded the previous year. Kerry stated that they are basically the same as last year.

Al Levron suggested BTNEP talk to local parish tourist commissions BP tourism funds to support La Fete

d'Ecologie and the paddle trip. Herman Waguespack made a motion for BTNEP to contact these parishes for these funds. Roland Guidry seconded this motion. There was no opposition.

John Tesvich asked if any projects were cut out entirely. Richard DeMay stated that none of the reoccurring projects were cut out, but some new ideas for projects were not funded.

Susan Testroet-Bergeron made a motion to accept the FY2012 Workplan as drafted; Tim Allen seconded the motion. There were no questions; there was neither discussion nor opposition. All were in favor. The workplan was approved. Doug Jacobson abstained.

V. Discussion Items

A.Update on State Master Plan Development-Leslie Suazo, Brown and Caldwell
Leslie stated that Brown and Caldwell is the lead contractor on the state's 2012 Master Plan Update. She stated that when the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority was established after Hurricane Katrina and Rita, it was charged to update the Master Plan. The policy of the development of the plan is being guided by a Framework Development Team(FDT). BTNEP has a seat on that team, along with other parish, state, federal and private entities.

She stated the FDT started meeting in November with the meetings being held bi-monthly. Starting in may it had been the intention to meet monthly, however, with the flood of Mississippi River and with some of the federal and state employees being re-tasked to planning and response to the flood, meetings had to be cancelled. She stated the next meeting will be held June 23rd and meetings will be held monthly and the plan will be presented in January 2012.

The FDT looked at data already collected, dated as far back as BTNEP's CCMP. So they are not trying to reinvent the wheel. She stated 1200 projects were inventoried and consolidated some, eliminated duplicate projects, and small projects were aggregated for modeling efficiency. After all this was done, about 275 projects are being considered for modeling. Projects will be grouped together then run through the modeling process then prioritized. She stated the model tool will not make the choices but that it will help assess the projects or suite of projects as to how they will perform over time and help access performance against long term operation and maintenance costs.

The modeling runs will start at the end of June. Once that starts, it will be important that everyone have a voice at the table. She urged that everyone be in contact with BTNEP with their thoughts. She stated a series of public meetings is planned starting at the end of July, til the end of August. There will be a total of 10. The next round will be when the draft plan is released, between December and January. Then the plan will need to be approved by the Legislature in March 2012.

She stated after it is released to the public, there will be a 60-day window for public comments.

Leslie then stated that a website is being developed with all the information on the plan. Right now it is on the OCPR website but it is getting too cumbersome so the FDT will have its own website in the near future.

B.Conservation Systems Approach to Sugarcane Production-Randolph Joseph, NRCS
Randolph stated that NRCS is trying to promote to farmers a systems approach to sugarcane production. But some farmers are resisting because of cost or cultural barriers that they don't want to change And there may be some things that just can't be changed because sugarcane is not a crop that requires minimal cultivation like soybean or corn.

He stated that the goal of this system is to show that conservation can give life to sugarcane land and it's a good best management practice. In the past, BMPs have been related to production only, but now it's a

conservation practice.

Randolph then went over NRCS's mission and the types of assistance and programs it provides.

The program he will discuss today is the Environmental Quality Incentive Program. This program includes this Conservation Systems Approach to Sugarcane Production.

He stated he was able to obtain $250,000 for this project. and he was able to get 14 participants, that covered 457 acres. Some of the barriers they ran into were cultural barriers and economics. One of the practices used by farmers was split ditching

Practices used that reduced run-off and soil erosionare precision land forming, repositioning residue, fallow land management, management of field borders and turn rows, as well as precision agriculture and critical area planting.

Randolph stated that about 50-60% of the farmers are already using this conservation system. The remaining 40% that are not is probably because of economics. He stated any of the practices can be applied, however, when you put them all together, you have a conservation system.

He then discussed the factors affecting participation: no formal lease agreements (hand shake agreements); resistance to change in cultural practices and economics.

Randolph then went over the Lake Verret GOMI Proposal. The proposal covers two areas along Lake Verret. He stated they requested about $1M for the two projects.

The selection criteria is a 3 step process: 1) the number of conservation practices selected; 2) practices divided into two categories-primary (project cost) and secondary (EQIP program); and 3) applicants applying the most conservation practices gets selected.

The goal of the Lake Verret project is to implement a Resource Management System Level Plan using the best science and technology available and use precision land forming as an incentive to adopt the systems approach.

The advantages of the project are: 1) eliminates split ditches; 2) eliminates mechanical clean out or chemical spraying of split ditches; 3) increases production by adding 2-3 rows of additional rows for each ditch eliminated; 4) stabilizes all drainage outlets with grade stabilization structures; 5) reduces the velocity of run off;6) reduces sediment run off; 7) reduces nutrient run off; 8) reduces erosion that occurs on quarter drains; 9) establishes field borders/filter strips; and 10) eliminates burning and improves air quality.

C.Restoration of a Small Bird Rookery Island in Lower Barataria Bay-Richard DeMay, BTNEP
Richard stated this is a concept that BTNEP has been considering since the BP oil spill. He stated these islands are heavily used by colonial nesting wading birds and sea birds, such as brown pelicans, grey egrets, Louisiana heron, roseate spoonbill and others.

He stated that these islands are important to the birds because they are remote and small in size and as such, they do not support predators.

During BTNEP's 2006 Bird Surveys, the islands were about 6 acres in size, but have reduced in size over time. If the islands should disappear, the birds will have to find other places that are free of predators to nest.

Richard stated he met with people in Plaquemines Parish to find out who owns these islands. Two of the

islands are owned by Plaquemines Parish, the rest belong to Apache.

Richard stated that he met with the National Wetland Research Center to look at maps from the past to see what the islands looked in previous years. In 1956, there were a combined total of 409 acres, by 2008 there were only 19.

He then informed the MC that research was done to find out what type of birds utilized the islands over time. Reviewing the Natural Heritage Program database also shows use by wading birds and sea birds. During some of the 2000 decadal surveys, numerous pairs (hundreds) of Tricolored Heron, White Ibis, and Great Egret used the three sites combined as Pelican Island.

Roseate Spoonbill, Snowy Egret and Plegadis spp Ibises were also nesting on these islands but in considerably lower numbers.

Richard stated that the proposed restoration technique is to surround the islands with rocks to the size desired. The advantages of this are 1) it provides a retainment for the material pumped in and 2) it would protect the island from erosion due to wave energy.

Richard then stated a partnership was formed with Apache to restore the islands. A partnership was also formed with American Bird Conservancy to find monetary resources. Several applications for funding have been submitted and the proposal has been distributed to numerous agencies and corporations.

Richard thanked Tim Allen, with Apache, for their support. Apache sent BTNEP a letter stating they are interested in seeing this project move forward and are donating $50,000 to the BTE Foundation for this project.

D.2011 Paddle Bayou Lafourche Update-Shelley Sparks, BTNEP
Shelley informed the MC that the paddle trip took place April 7-10th. It was the 10 yr. anniversary of this cultural and educational event. She stated that again this year there was a kick off event hosted by the Donaldsonville Downtown Development District.

She went over the itinerary of the trip while showing slides of the pictures taken throughout the event.

She stated that this year there was online registration which made it easier and less work for the BTNEP staff.

This year 3 paddlers were recognized for being on the trip 10 yrs in a row. They were Bill Hill, Larry Naquin and Dwayne Theriot. They were given a shirt with the BTNEP logo and "10 Year Paddler" embroidered on it.

There were at least 100 paddlers per day, 178 individual paddlers over the course of the 4 days.

VI. New Business
Kerry announced that Mark McManus, US Coast Guard, is being promoted and this will be his last MC meeting.

Shelley announced the winners of the Invasive Species Mini-Grants:
- Andrew Elliot-documentary on invasive species
- Cree McCree-rebranding and outreach with Nutria fur designs
- Marsh Dog, LLC-dog food from nutria meat

Mel Landry announced that USGS came out with new land loss map this week and can be found on their website.

John Clark stated that a new website is up for the Tri-Parish project in Upper Terrebonne Basin. The website is