

Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program
MC Meeting #59 Minutes
9:30AM- March 7th, 2012
Nicholls State University
Century Room
Thibodaux, LA

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Roll Call

Management Conference Members Present:

Vicki Duffourc - Jefferson Parish

Ann Wilson – LA Dept. of Education

Vince Guillory – LA Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries

Archie Chaisson, III – Lafourche Parish

Dwayne Bourgeois – LA Association of Levee Boards

Roland Guidry – LA Oil Spill Coordinators Office

Shannon Lafont – LA Science Teachers Association

John Conover – LUMCON

Alan Matherne – LSU Ag Center & LA Sea Grant

Gary LaFleur – Nicholls State University

P.J. Hahn – Plaquemines Parish

Jean Landry – The Nature Conservancy

Susan Hennington – US Corps of Engineers

Sarah Brennan – US Coast Guard

Doug Jacobson – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Rick Hartman – National Marine Fisheries Service

Alton James – USDA

Al Levron- Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government

Karim Belhadjali – Governor's Office of Coastal Activities

Ed Landgraf – LA Mid-Continent Oil & Gas Association

Organizations not present:

Louisiana Wildlife Federation

J.A. Rummler – Point Coupee Parish

Martha Cauzabon – South Central Planning & Development Commission

Susan Testroet-Bergeron – USGS

Archie Chaisson, Jr. – Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District

John Tesvich – Commercial Fisheries

John Clark – Iberville Parish

Emelise Cormier – LA Dept. of Environmental Quality

Paul Landry – LA Dept. of Health & Hospitals

Linda Pace – LA Dept. of Natural Resources

Jennifer Roberts – Louisiana Association of Conservation Districts

Tim Allen – LA Landowners Association

Herman Waguespack – American Sugarcane League

Chet Chaisson – Greater Lafourche Port Commission

Joey Breaux – LA Dept. of Ag & Forestry

Debra Credeur – LA Dept. of Culture, Recreation & Tourism

Ann Perry - LA Dept. of Economic Development

Buck Vandersteen – LA Forestry Association

Angela Rathle – U.S. National Park Service

Guests

Kimble Chris – NSU Graduate Student, under Quenton Fontenot working on aquaculture

T.J. Everidge - NSU Graduate Student, under Raj Boopathy working on antibiotic-resistant bacteria

Sumana Kalyanasundaram - NSU Graduate Student

Michele Felterman - NSU Graduate Student, under Allyse Ferrara working on fishery and diet of Alligator Gar

Stacy Martinez - NSU Graduate Student, under Marilyn Kilgen working on bacteria in Bayou Lafourche

Blaine Adams - NSU Graduate Student, under Dr. John Doucet working on genetics of crawfish

Joe Doucet – dropped his muffin, NSU Graduate Student, under Dr. John Doucet working on genetics of crawfish

Clayton Kearne - NSU Graduate Student, under Raj Boopathy working on shrimp wastewater in aquaculture

Al Guarisco – Interested person and citizen

Derek Adams - NSU Graduate Student, under Raj Boopathy working on biocontrol methods for shrimp pathogens

Jonathon Foret – Wetlands discovery center

Diane Huhn – Bayou Grace Community Services

Nick Matherne - Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government

Andy Richard – NSU Geomatics, will do a presentation for Bayou Lafourche Cleanup

Shelley Sparks – The Ocean Conservancy

Leslie Suazo – Brown and Caldwell

BTNEP Staff

Kerry St.Pé

Richard DeMay

Dean Blanchard

Matt Benoit

Alma Robichaux

Andrew Barron

Michael Massimi

Joe Dantin

Kristy Monier

B. Reading and approval of the minutes of the last meeting

1. Al Levron – requested a motion to dispense with reading of the minutes

2. Rick Hartman objected. Rick rejects the title of his agency in the previous minutes. There is no such agency as the US Fisheries Service. The minutes should be amended so that they reflect the title of his agency – National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
3. The minutes were accepted with changes to the minutes that Rick noted

A. Program Activities – Kerry St.Pé

B. Personnel Changes

1. BTNEP hired two new employees:
2. Joe Dantin – Public involvement coordinator – has been with us for 2 or so months. He and Matt have been doing a lot of volunteer work.
3. Kristy Monier – our media and events coordinator

C. Presentations/Exhibits/Field Trips

1. Interviews for Public Involvement Coordinator
2. Interviews for Media Coordinator
3. Hummingbird Document Completed and Printed
4. Fourchon Avian Survey
5. Paddle Bayou Lafourche Preparation
6. Coastal Zone Management Meetings
7. Bayou Lafourche Clean-Up Preparations and Site Captain Meetings
8. Christmas Tree Clean-Up w/ Mandalay Wildlife Management
9. Animal Adaptation Presentation @ St. Charles Elem. School
10. Volunteer Event w/ University of Buffalo @ NSU Farm
11. Fourchon Ridge Vegetative Transects w/ Mike Matherne, LSU
12. South Louisiana Wetlands Discovery Center
13. Arbor Day Tree Planting
14. Migratory Bird Celebration Preparation
15. World Wetland Day at the Water Life Museum
16. Youth Wetlands Summit
17. EPA Program Evaluation
18. Exxon Tree Planting
19. Fourchon Ridge Plantings w/ BRAND EIS Volunteers
20. 4-H Presentation
21. NEP Long Island Sound Group Ridge Planting
22. Congressional Visits, Washington D.C.
23. State Master Plan Comments
24. Volunteer Event - Mail-Out Preparation For Bayou Lafourche Clean-Up

D. Media Interviews (As of December 7, 2012)

Daily Comet (Thibodaux, LA)

- *"1 million donation could help rebuild bird islands"*- December 8, 2011
- *"Feud brews over BP oil-spill fines"*- December 12, 2011
- *"Cleanup seeks volunteers"*- December 17, 2011
- *"Your Christmas tree can help save the coast"*- December 26, 2011
- *"Bayou Lafourche cleanup seeks volunteers"*- January 7, 2012
- *"Cheer and Jeers"*- January 14, 2012
- *"Help Clean Lake Fields"*- February 1, 2012
- *"You can flock to waterways to spot eagles"*- February 3, 2012
- *"Youth summit focuses on wetlands"*- February 6, 2012

The Advocate (Baton Rouge, LA)

- *"Donation to help rebuild islands in bay"*- December 9, 2011

The Courier (Houma, LA)

- *"Your Christmas tree can help save the coast"*- December 26, 2011
- *"Youth wetlands summit set for Feb. 4"*- January 11, 2012
- *"Help clean up Bayou Lafourche"*- January 15, 2012
- *"Seminar focuses on business lands"*- January 15, 2012
- *"Southern parishes slow to pick up farm tourism"*- January 17, 2012
- *"State will sweep bayou businesses"*- February 1, 2012
- *"Beauty on the Bayou"*- February 2, 2012
- *"World Wetlands Day"*- February 3, 2012
- *"Don't Give Up On Us"*- February 9, 2012

The Daily Review (Morgan City, LA)

- *"Fighting Erosion with old Christmas trees"*- December 27, 2011
- *"Eagle Expo's 7th edition set next month"*- January 6, 2012
- *"7th Eagle Expo"*- February 1, 2012

The Lafourche Gazette (Larose, LA)

- *"Plans set for Bayou Lafourche clean-up"*- January 18, 2012
- *"Volunteers needed for bayou clean up"*- January 29, 2012

The Times-Picayune (New Orleans, LA)

- *"Push to rebuild islands for birds revs up"*- January 4, 2012
- *"La. Industry faces \$2.5 million in penalties"*- January 4, 2012

The News-Star (Monroe, LA)

- *"Group hopes to rebuild islands for birds with \$1M from Shell"*- December 9, 2011
- *"Parish teens collaborate on coastal protections"*- January 15, 2012

The Daily Advertiser (Lafayette, LA)

- *"Agriculture will help Gulf"*- December 8, 2011
- *"Trees help marsh erosion: Christmas trees get a second chance"*- December 28, 2011

The Banner-Tribune (Franklin, LA)

- *"USDA puts up funds for Gulf river basins"*- December 7, 2011
- *"Derelict crab trap cleanup planned"*- February 8, 2012
- *"Eagle Expo set for 9-11"*- January 9, 2012

Leesville Daily Leader (Leesville, LA)

- *"Teens to discuss coastal protection"*- January 15, 2012

Ruston Daily Leader (Ruston, LA)

- *"Group hopes to rebuild islands for birds"*- December 8, 2011

The Vacherie Enterprise

- *"Workshops and Boat Tours to Highlight 7th Eagle Expo"*- January 25, 2012
- *"NSU Jubilee Festival to begin soon"*- February 15, 2012

Jennings Daily News (Jennings, LA)

- *"State, Nonprofits plan crap trap cleanup"*- February 8, 2012

Gonzales Weekly Citizens (Gonzales, LA)

- *"LWDF seeks volunteers for crap trap cleanup"*- February 9, 2012

Other Interviews:

Fox 8 Interview Re: President Obama's State of the Union Address on drilling

New Orleans Historical Collection, Interview for documentary "Cultural Connection" – Kerry St. Pe'

LA Times, Interview concerning State Master Plan – Kerry St. Pe'

D. Meetings

State Master Plan Public Meetings

Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District Meeting

Davis Pond Advisory Board Meetings

Coastal Zone Management Meetings

CWPPRA Outreach Meeting

WETSHOP Meeting (Planning)

Bayou Grace Meetings

Myrtle Grove Meetings

Lafourche Parish Game & Fisheries Commission Meeting

Louisiana Master Naturalist

II. Schedule Next Meeting Date: Date suggested is May 31, 2012

III. Discussion Items

EPA Program Evaluation

Kerry - We have finished our 5th program evaluation. We are required to tell EPA what we've done for the past 4 years. We submitted it digitally. It was a monumental effort. We did it for the first time in house and used the same template as the last version so we could do it ourselves. Shelley helped us a lot to finish it before she left. Dean was the manager of this project. He cleaned it up and submitted it to EPA. We finished about 2 weeks ago. It's a pass or fail grade. If we fail, then lose funding. Only one program has lost funding as a result of a fail.

Dean- will have a site visit with a representative of EPA from Washington with Doug and a member of another estuary program member. The three will make up the evaluation team. We will take them on a field trip. Then we will be evaluated. Shelley – this was one of her last efforts and she helped us tremendously before she left. We really appreciate it.

Doug Jacobson- I appreciate the work that goes into this. Each time we have a harder time to get money from Congress. This evaluation is essential for that. The ANEP is a very important part of this effort.

Kerry - We do a lot with Rich Innes with the ANEP. In these hard economic times he has increased our funding for all of the NEPs.

Doug – EPA has a big research vessel that we are going to dry dock and be trying to sell, it's amazing that we have been able to maintain funding for the NEPs.

Bayou Lafourche paddle trip

Dean – online registration should be ready to go. You can choose one, two or however many days you want to paddle. It's April 19th – 22nd

It's a good event. We'd like to invite everyone to come out and enjoy it.

Christmas tree project

Kerry - This is a project with Terrebonne parish and the State Dept of Wildlife and Fisheries.

Maritime forest Ridge at Fourchon

Richard – We are working with Mike Matherne. We're doing a lot of work on the Maritime forest Ridge at Fourchon. You've seen small presentations on the vegetative work that Matt is working on but there is a lot more going on. We want to start a project with Mike to look at vegetative succession and soils on the ridge and the surrounding marsh. We want to use GIS to look at vegetative succession into the future. We will do GIS work on how long it takes for species of vegetation to come in on the ridge. We've been doing avian transects looking at bird changes over the ridge, looking at successional changes with regard to bird species. Also, we are looking at the flanking ridges over time. The port went back in during Rita and Katrina and now we are collecting cross section data. We also have an agreement with an engineering company to look at the cross section of the ridge relative to the surrounding marsh and how that changes over time. We are collecting data once per year. The port collected a lot of information after they had shaped the ridge and after Katrina and Rita. But now we've taken up the data collection and are looking at how the ridge shape has changed over time and is sloughing off and losing sediment into the flanking into the marsh.

Rick – Are those data available?

Richard – yes I have that data, I can send them to you. In fact we just received the latest new ridge cross sections last week.

Rick – You have the whole range of histories?

Richard – I have the whole range

Rick – I'd like to see that

Youth wetland summit

Kerry - held by the South Louisiana Wetlands Discovery Center. Alma participated in this.

La. Naturalist program

Kerry - Andrew participated in this initiative. LSU Ag center developing it similar to the LA master gardener program.

Exxon tree planting

Kerry - Matt, Joe and Richard have done a lot of work on this project. The pictures on the screen are images from volunteer efforts since the last meeting. We had three cameras stolen from the office and they had a lot of these images on the cameras. It seems that every time we have work on the office something is stolen.

Fourchon ridge plantings – Brandeis University Volunteers

Master plan comments

Kerry – We shared these comments with the MC. We have a presentation today from Karim. Have a few extra copies of the BTNEP master plan comments. After we run out if the students want a copy of those comments we can email them to you if you leave us your email.

NEP visit to DC

Kerry - Dean and I just attended the NEP visit to DC. We go to two ANEP meetings per year and one is in DC where we visit with our congressional delegation – Landrieu, Vitter, and Jeff Landry. A letter always comes from Senator Whitehouse and asks the Congressional delegations from around the country to support the NEPS. We also attend a lot of presentations from the EPA and other NEPs during the meeting.

We have a long list of media interviews. I want to mention that FOX 8 has created a bureau in Houma. Carolyn Scofield is their reporter. It is totally separate from HTV. They have been coming to the office lately. She is from Florida.

That's it Mr. Chairman.

AI - Joe Dantin will be making the first presentation: Lake Fields Cleanup Update

A. Lake Fields Clean-Up Update, March 10, 2012 – Joseph Dantin

Dwayne Bourgeois – We implemented a project along with the cleanup. It includes 6000 ft of shoreline protection armored with cut grass northeastern corner of the lake. Inside of the camp canal we will be dredging used to make place for vegetation on either side. But we are working with Vince and Lafourche Parish Fish and Game Commission. Right now we are trying to get help from the State Legislature to reroute the water through the canal instead of into the Lake Fields. It's a project that has a lot of support

Kerry – project we have been supporting for years. That would correct a lot of problems in Lake Fields.

Dwayne – If necessary, we would like to shut down the Bayou Dumar entrance

Joseph Dantin – We teamed up with Lafourche Parish Fish and Game to do this project.

The Lake Fields and Lake Long watersheds are around 250,000 acres. It extends almost as far north as Thibodaux. Lake Fields itself is about 2000 acres. The entirety of the preserve is around 6000 acres. We have a restoration plan. We plan on doing a cleanup in the interior of Lake Fields. That is where the Lake been inundated with debris and recreationalist boats.

The water that goes into the lake from Bayou Folse and into canals to the northern part of the lake is turbid. As a result, there is no SAV growth. We want to take some of the water from Bayou Folse that is currently going into the lake and divert it through Camp Canal so that it bypasses the lake. We plan to do this by dredging Camp Canal.

The north Lafourche Levee district will also be constructing terraces on the northeast side of the lake.

So, the materials we will be cleaning up include the following:

- a) Debris
- b) Hurricane trash
- c) Sunken Vessels – about 12 small vessels.
- d) Boat litter

Waste contractors will donate dumpsters. Lafourche Parish will use grapples and dispose of the boats. Permits have been obtained from LDWF

There are 60 or so camp leases along Camp Canal and there is lots of litter associated with it. We quantified the material at 6.5 to 7 tons of debris not including vessels

We have 50-100 volunteers with 20-25 vessels that will come out to help with the volunteer effort. We also have camp sites for staging equipment and volunteers. A camp owner is even going to loan us a barge.

Went to each sunken/abandoned vessel and looked for LA numbers which were removed, with exception of 2 vessels. We looked for ID tags on the boats and then spoke to Captain Rachael Zanzanelli at LDWF. She said that if the boat was less than 20 feet with no id numbers on the boat and submerged then it can be disposed of as trash.

Roland Guidry- If these are legal boats with tags then you only have to provide 30 days notice advertised in a local paper, and then you can dispose of the boat or claim it.

Joe - Some are buried back in the marsh area. This Saturday, March 10th is the cleanup. It will end by 330 or 400 in the afternoon.

Nicholls Geomatics will supply 3 to 4 volunteers from NSU.

Shelley – might be interesting to notify the camp owners about what is pulled out of the cleanup.

Joe – I agree. This might help in having the camp owners take some ownership of the debris.

B. Bayou Lafourche Clean-Up Update, March 31, 2012 – Alma Robichaux

Alma - B. Lafourche Trash Sweep is the name of the project. NSU Geomatics is going to be doing the presentation. So, NSU Geomatics took the 160 miles of bayou and divided into 5 mile sections. There are 20- or so volunteer site captains who are going to be in charge of the entire cleanup along the bayou. They are in charge of getting volunteers, doing advertising, and will have volunteers on land near bridges and in boats on the water. We will try to characterize garbage according to what kind and sources there are. We are using data cards from the Ocean Conservancy and we will be categorizing invasive species using some cards that we developed. We need more volunteers in the north part around Donaldsonville, Napoleonville, and Labadieville. Thibodaux is inundated with volunteers. Posters are available drawn by Meredith McKoin, a student worker from BTNEP. We did a mail out to residents and businesses on both sides of the road on bayou sides. In them we provided business incentives – important facts about the bayou and information about BTNEP. Also included is a survey with return address so that they can fill out information about septic tanks and information to raise awareness of residents. On the survey it asks them to fill in what type of sewage treatment they use and if they know about use of bayou Lafourche. It also asks if they want to take part in a homeowners class on sewage, which is a self certification of their sewage system. We are getting good results. We made an announcement for cleanup in many outlets. Sponsorship for the cleanup is a grant from Keep Louisiana Beautiful and Wal-Mart. We also got Donations from Fourchon Port

Commission in the form of gloves, Bayou Lafourche freshwater District helped with mail out with a contribution of \$5000 and then an additional \$6000. Ace Hardware donating grabbers, Chabile's is helping with recycling of tires. There are a lot of tire stores along Bayou Lafourche and car washes.

Michael, Andrew and Matt did survey of trash on bayou Lafourche and found that there wasn't a lot of trash. This is to get people back on the bayou. Awareness and education are the main reasons for doing this project. SWEEDIE – came to the meeting last night. We have had 30 – 40 people for each meeting.

Doug – Is the amount of trash is down from previous years?

Alma - NSU did about a mile along the fountain near NSU. They picked up a lot of stuff but will not be a whole lot of trash.

Kerry- what started this was an incident at last year's Bayou Lafourche paddle trip. The Bayou Lafourche Fresh Water District had to collect debris and trash with a net associated with the recent dredging of the upper bayou. There was so much trash and debris that the rope broke and left all of the debris floating on the bayou and paddlers had to paddle through garbage. Also, a tree had to be removed with our BTNEP chainsaw.

Vicky Duffourc – What is current DHH requirement for home sewage certification?

Alma – You have to have someone come out every 6 months to make sure it's working properly. Septic tanks have to be pumped every 3-5 years. ATUs have to be inspected every 6 months and pumped out yearly.

If a homeowner takes the course through LDHH, then they can do the inspection themselves. It saves the homeowner a lot of money.

Vicky Duffourc – Jefferson parish would be interested in doing outreach to the Lafitte area.

Alma – Now I'll turn the presentation over to the Nicholls Geomatics Program.

Andy Richard, NSU Geomatics – We are assisting BTNEP in collection information and mapping where the trash is being deposited in the bayou. We will be marking bridge locations and identifying the locations of the site captains.

Two weeks before the event we will mark trash deposited with a GPS and locate these areas on a map, so that we can identify where this trash is being deposited before the event for site captains and for BTNEP.

During the cleanup – will have 20 other students and we will have people with each site captain recording all of the trash being picked up so that all the data is consistent.

After the cleanup GIS will be used to show where the cleanup occurred and the invasive species that were identified.

We prepared maps sections for each the site captains showing who was assigned to which sections for the cleanup.

Maps were shown in slides and there was a discussion of the map and where one site captain's section ends and another one begins, as you go down the bayou. Dumpster locations were also identified along the bayou. We are still missing site captains for the last two sections.

Alma - NSU Geomatics will also use data sheets to determine where the garbage is coming from. They will document areas near the bridges where we are collecting trash. This might result in signage on the bridges to remind people not to litter. There are hot spots in people's back yards. Some people deposit stuff in back yard along bayou. These maps from NSU Geomatics will be available through BTNEP. We will clean up inside the bayou and along the banks from HWY 1 to 308. Abandoned boats will be marked and picked up by B. Lafourche Freshwater District. The job of the site captain is to do everything on the ground before and during the event, including volunteer recruitment. They are also responsible for distributing bags and gloves and t-shirts. Distribution day is on March 24th where the captains will pick up everything like gloves, bags, and T-shirts to distribute to their volunteers on the day of the cleanup. We have sent out safety guidelines to all of the site captains. Lafourche Parish water patrol will be out doing safety. Young children will be out on bridges. We have a site captain just for Nicholls because there are so many students who are planning to come out. We are planning for 1000 people overall for the cleanup on land and water. T-shirts will be guaranteed for people who preregistered. We might try going to fast food places for donation, since we see many of their wrappers around the bridges. 15 banners will be placed along the bayouside. White Car Marketing Communications is the company that did all of the graphics free of charge for the Bayou Lafourche Trash Sweep.

C. Update of BTNEP's Bird Habitat Restoration Efforts – Richard DeMay

Bird Islands Project

Richard – First I'll be providing an update on the Bird Islands Project. The purpose of the project is to restore small islands for seabirds and shore birds.

Shell Oil Company donated \$1 million and the American bird conservancy donated \$250,000 through NFWF – National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

We currently have about 1.5 million for restoration of one of the islands

CPRa will be doing engineering and design work for the islands. I'll be meeting with Darin Lee tomorrow in our office.

BP is another company that we will talk to. If we can raise 2.6 million, then this is more than we need to start a restoration project for the bird islands idea. Our ultimate goal is to restore 4 of the islands, in the area of East Grande Terre on the boundary of Plaquemine and Jefferson Parishes. Small islands in this area, like Cat Island are ideal places for this project.

Images show boom during the oil spill and Richard pointed out the islands that we want to work on including Cat Island that P.J. Hahn was going to talk about later.

There is a lot of interest in this project and it will be very expensive.

You don't expect birds on Whiskey, Trinity or any of the bigger islands. Birds don't use main barrier islands for nesting. They are too big and contain too many predators. The birds are looking for small islands without predators. They want small isolated islands to do their egg laying and chick rearing.

We are hoping this will be picked up for early NRDA restoration.

Exxon Property on Grand Isle

Richard - We've been courting Exxon for over one year to allow us to do restoration work on their property on Grand Isle. We recently signed an agreement with them last year in December to allow us to do work on this property.

We will go onto their property and plant hardwood trees on part of the property and on another site we will create nesting habitat for shorebirds. The areas are located in blocks. This is an old location where all of the people who worked for Exxon lived in houses during the early part of last century. They tore down the houses in the late 70s. Exxon has been mowing grass to maintain this area ever since.

Exxon has been looking to move on from this location.

We will be working with Aaron Pierce at NSU, a professor in ornithology who will work on monitoring the site and designing the monitoring plan.

We will be looking at oyster versus sand as nesting substrates for the birds. We will put different materials down on ground. Then determine numbers of shore birds utilizing the various substrates for nesting sites. Not a lot of work like this is being done in the US in terms of trying to restore this habitat. The COE is trying to restore some of the bird islands but nobody is looking at restoring this type of habitat.

Least Turn Beach Nesting Areas on Grand Isle

Richard showed a map of Grand Isle on eastern end island.

Richard - We are also working with Nature Conservancy and looking at protecting least tern habitat just off the map east to the state park. The town of Grand Isle usually rakes the beach destroying the potential for this habitat. The oil spill was the only time the

town stopped raking and Least Terns began nesting on part of the beach. We made a presentation to the town council to allow us to fence off these areas. The plan is to go into these areas on the beach and fence off areas behind landowners properties to keep people out of these areas.

We are planning to put together some PSAs with Tab Benoit to let people know what we are doing and why.

Kerry – during the oil spill BTNEP bought and set up fences/barriers to protect the least turn nesting areas from traffic. It cost BTNEP about \$3000. Those barriers are still being used today.

Richard - NRDA does not provide the biggest bang for the buck. They are more interested in habitat restoration and the resource that were impacted.

Rick Hartman – I've been involved in some of the questions coming from Washington. NMFS is not hearing talk of this bird island project. The State of La. is only pushing certain projects that come out of the state master plan. We are not hearing any talk of these projects for the bird islands. We need to talk to the state to push this project.

Richard – we are talking to Jerome about this project. NRDA is supposed to be trying to get at the resource. So it shouldn't be completely driven by the State Master Plan.

Doug Jacobson – do you have long term agreements with Exxon to make sure it's protected?

Richard – we have non-binding agreements and a word of mouth agreement. They are not in the position to donate the property to an NGO. While it worries us, we are in the market with TNC to try to work with Exxon to have the property donated. We need a lot of money to buy property on grand isle. We are hoping they will want to break up the property and donate it to TNC and to the BTEF.

Doug – can TNC give them a non development tax credit that they can see?

Jean Landry – we are in those talks right now. These conversations have been going on for 3-4 years.

Gary Lafleur – what is the title of the project.

Richard - “BTNEP Small Island Restoration”

Shelley - What will the 2.6 million dollars be used for?

Richard - Trying to double the size of these islands. If you consolidate the effort and do several islands, then you drop the costs of doing the projects. \$4-5 million can be used to restoring 40-50 acres. It's expensive but the birds don't utilize anything else.

D. State Master Plan 2012 – Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority Representative

Introduction

Karim – I'll be talking about the State's Coastal Master Plan. The Draft came out on Jan 12. Louisiana formed through natural processes, so the plan works to use natural processes because these processes allow for the most sustainable type of restoration. These are processes that continue today and we can see this in Wax Lake and Atchafalaya deltas.

We are facing a crisis. Since the 1930s we have lost about 1800 square miles in total, at a rate of 16 miles per year. We will be losing 770-1800 square miles over next 50 years if we choose to do nothing, which is referred to as the future without project (FWOP) option, or the option without the State Master Plan. 770 square miles is the rate lost under a moderate sea level; whereas, 1756 square miles is under higher range but not the highest. Losses could be as high as 51 square miles per year.

We have a continued threat to our communities. This is a map showing a flood risk increase. We could have 2-3 extra feet of flooding in some areas if we don't implement big projects. We tried to represent this in terms of dollars – \$7.7 to \$23 billion annually over 50 years in damages.

The public perception is that nothing has been done since Katrina-Rita. Since 2007, we have maintained over 159 miles of levees and have already restored 19,000 acres between the state and federal government. We've spent 17 billion dollars in upgrades and repairs to levee systems.

Why another plan?

Karim – This plan was legislatively mandated. And, every 5 years we will have to develop a new plan. The previous Master Plan in 2007 had big arrows and lots of diversions. It wasn't very specific with regard to projects. Much of the 2007 was carried forward with LACPR.

We are using a working coast concept – people live and work on the coast.

The Master Plan consists of various model components. It is a series of models to inform the process for which projects give best land building or storm reduction. There was extensive public review and input that went into the plan. We created three focus groups as part of the Framework Development Team:

- a) Navigation
- b) Fisheries
- c) Oil and gas

We might add a Communities focus group also.

The people guiding this process were on a Framework Development Team (FDT), which included lot of representatives from various groups and agencies. BTNEP was represented by Michael and Kerry.

Public meetings

Karim – after the master plan was developed we held public meetings. There were 750 public officials in total at all the meetings. They were very well attended. P.J. Hahn attended every single one. There were 120 public comments at the public meetings and 2000 public comments in total on the Master Plan. We looked at all of the plans that have been put forth in the last 5 years and used them to develop the MP.

There were two decision points that we were most interested in looking at in the plan:

- a) Risk reduction – how do we reduce risk across the coast
- b) Restoration - restore as many wetlands as possible

What is different about this plan? We tried to understand the total of restoration dollars we might be receiving over the next 50 years, which we estimated at about 50 billion dollars. The plan was fiscally constrained around this total amount. We wanted to pick projects that perform well across uncertainties like medium and high sea level rise. The factors involved in making decisions included the following:

- a) Decision criteria
- b) Ecosystem services

What's in the plan?

Karim – This was the draft plan that came out in January of 2012. We are looking at some level of protection for all coast communities. We have investment in the local landscape like barrier islands, headlands, and shorelines. We estimate that we can bring down the cost to 2.3 billion per year in the moderate scenario but it will not be at zero. 5.4 billion decrease over future without action compared to the less optimistic - 18.1 billion decrease over FWOP.

Land can be built with projects. However, we are not going to restore the coast to the current time. We will still be having a loss with 50 billion dollars. We will try to hold on to what we have.

What the Master plan delivers

Karim – Most of projects are in marsh creation. Most of the projects are nonstructural. Distribution of funds is about even across major coastal divisions.

Southwest Louisiana

- a) Maintenance of chenier ridges
- b) Limit salt water intrusion

- c) Levees for Lake Charles and Abbeville
- d) Shoreline protection

Central coast

- a) Maintain land gain in Atchafalaya region
- b) Fresh water to Terrebonne
- c) Nonstructural protection
- d) Marsh Creation
- e) Levees

Southeast

- a) Sediment and water from Miss River diversions
- b) Continue investing in Levees for New Orleans and Lafourche region
- c) Marsh creations projects
- d) Barrier islands
- e) Land building experiments
- f) FWOP - No diversions
- g) Multiple small diversions
- h) Maximizing land building

Land building

Karim – \$4 billion in land building for sediment diversions will yield about 250 square miles. \$18 billion in Marsh Creation can restore about 200 square miles of land. We want to be situated so that we can take opportunities when we have high water and large flood events on the Mississippi River. Sediment diversions are in the highest priority category.

The public comment period ends on Feb 25.

The Master Plan will be released on MARCH 21. It will be submitted to the legislature for signature on March 26.

Archie III – Gordon Dove has moved to put more of Terrebonne and Lafourche into the plan and levee system.

Karim – If there are new projects, they can be proposed. Even so, I don't think it is going to change the mix of projects at this time.

Michael – What are the projects/changes to the final plan?

Karim – there are going to be some changes in the plan based on comments from public and stakeholders. We are still trying to figure out which changes will be made and which will come out near March 21. It will be tight to get all of the comments. The final plan will be on our website by March 26th.

Al Levron – is it anticipated that the legislature will act quickly?

Karim – It has to go through transportation and development within the house subcommittee

Rick – what is the purpose of next week's FDT? Are we going to have some of the suggested projects there at that meeting?

Karim – Yes

Jean – We missed opportunities with the flood in 2011. Are we going to be positioned to take advantage of future floods?

Karim – it will take some time before we will be positioned for that

Kerry – how would you use the high river water when people are already flooding? How will you use the flood waters? Can you give us a scenario?

Karim – With sediment diversions we plan to use the water when the river is full of sediment on rising river. We will not flood anybody.

Kerry – How do you get the sediment from the river in to the target areas where it's needed.

Karim - These are all issues that need to be resolved

Gary Lafleur - How are the comments going to be analyzed?

Karim - Specific project comments will be grouped together

Gary – can you go back to the slide named, “a closer look at southeast coast.” I wanted to find project descriptions but all I found is a line /title. Is there a page for each of those projects?

Karim – for each project there is a project fact sheet similar to the way CWPPRA does. It's in appendix A2; A1 of the Master Plan.

Gary – I have another problem with this map with regard to Isle de Jean Charles. The way the map is drawn, the levee is going around Pointe aux Chenes, which is included but the wording for Isle de Jean Charles is inside the levee but Isle de Jean Charles will be left out of the levee system. Maybe you guys could color in red the towns that will be left out of the levee system in the interest of being perfectly honest with the public.

Kerry – Did I hear you right that in 30 years you will create x amount of land?

Karim – What I was referring to was that by 2042 we could be gaining land under the Master Plan.

Kerry – So in my lifetime you will be able to take me out and actually see land being built?

Shelley – When you give a time period for when we will start seeing land gain is that part of the plan or the whole master plan?

Karim – the gain in land is coast wide

IV. New Business

Cat Island Presentation - PJ. Hahn

P.J. Hahn - I'm with Plaquemines Parish Government and I'm the Coastal Zone Manager. I appreciate being put on the agenda at the last minute. I'm going to talk about restoration of Cat Island.

Cat Island is near the border of Plaquemines and Jefferson Parishes in Barataria bay. In 1998, Cat Island was 40 acres in size. In 2008, it was down to 4.8 acres. During oil spill it dropped to a little over 3 acres.

There were thick mangroves on the island and after the oil impacts to these mangroves the land is disappearing fast. During the oil spill, the mangroves were very thick and had a lot of use by Pelicans. Pelicans use the island to nest and they make big nests.

History of pelican and DDT

After Pelicans became extinct in Louisiana due to the use of DDT, the state used queen Bess to re-colonize coastal Louisiana with Brown Pelicans. Soon after that the birds re-colonized Cat Island. By 2008 pelicans were de-listed from threatened list.

Various species that use Cat Island:

- a) Pelican
- b) Roseate spoon bill
- c) Reddish egret
- d) Egrets

During oil spill we had 10000s of birds on the island. You could not have walked the island without stepping on a bird because the density of nests was so high.

P.J. compared pictures of the mangroves and the island before the spill and after the spill. The mangroves are mostly gone from the island as a result of the oil spill and most of the island is gone because there is no vegetation to hold the island sediment together.

There are only a few birds nesting on the island today

Rachel Sweeney from NOAA suggested that we should put rocks around the island. We are hoping to get a permit for reconstruction of the islands very soon.

These are the only islands that the birds utilize and nest on because there are no predators. If we don't rebuild these islands then they will be gone forever and possibly the birds with the islands.

Kerry - Y'all have a plan to use something other than rock

PJ – looking at using interlock bags. Sorry, I mean Deltalock bags. Then you can pump sediment behind them and build land. We are looking to go out after the birds finish nesting and do a mangrove planting.

Kerry – It's going to be really important to get mangroves re-established

P.J. - Working with Rachael to help

Rick – CWPPRA has a new demo project with NRCS that is probably about 1 million dollars. People can nominate areas for fast response restoration. This project would be an excellent candidate for these funds. You might call Quinn Kinler who is the project manager. And rock shouldn't be a concern because it was put on Queen Bess. I can't see anyone complaining about rocks on Cat island.

Kerry- Black mangroves are dying because they are very sensitive to oiling. That's why you are losing them. The pneumatophore tubes get clogged with oil. There is a grower here in Thibodaux named Billy Finney.

P.J. We are worried that if we don't get mangroves on the island then we will lose it all. The disappearance of the mangroves is a direct result of the BP spill. There should be emergency effort to do restoration of those islands. We are planning to meet with Jerome Zeringue.

Introduction to the Ocean Conservancy – Shelley Sparks

Shelley - Now I'm working with the ocean conservancy. Many in the environmental field don't really know what we do. The OC often focuses on blue water issues. We hope to change this in the future so that we are dealing more with wetland/coastal issues. We have offices in Baton Rouge and New Orleans. Our main issues are marine debris, marine spatial planning, and gulf wide restoration in the NO office.

After oil spill we developed their framework for ocean restoration. It's similar to the BTNEP CCMP. They have a marine conservation plan for marine restoration. For now we are focused on deep water marine restoration issues. But we understand the relationship between ocean and wetlands.

Part of my job is to relay to people in DC the environmental concerns that people have here. We are mostly involved in policy and advocacy, we don't really do projects. We are recently heavily involved in legacy restoration.

Roland Guidry

I would like to congratulate the NSU grad students on career choices. We appreciate you guys showing up at this meeting.

Kerry

I was asked to make an announcement about the “*Veins in the Gulf*” documentary. It is showing tonight at NSU. It’s been in the works since 2002. It’s a film that was produced by Elizabeth Coffman and Ted Hardin. It’s a good documentary. They have followed our issues for years. That showing is tonight and starts at 6:00 P.M.

Michael – It’s fairly unique as a documentary. There is no central voice; it is all told in the voices of the people in the documentary. It’s really good.

Richard – I have a new Hummingbird publication here and if you want a copy you can pick up one from me or come by the office.