

Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program  
Management Conference Meeting #62 Minutes  
Multi-Purpose Room – Ellender Memorial Library  
9:30 a.m. – Thursday, January 31, 2013

Management Conference Member	Member Attended	Alternate Attended	Declined
American Sugarcane League	Herman Waguespack		
Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District	Benjamin Malbrough		
Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana			
Coastal Conservation Association of LA		Ed Langraf	
Coastal Protection Restoration Authority		Kenneth Bahlinger	Jerome Zeringue Kirk Rhinehart
Commercial Fisheries			
Greater Lafourche Parish Port Commission			Chett Chaisson
Iberville Parish			
Jefferson Parish		Lilly Zhou	
LA Association of Levee Boards			Dwayne Bourgeois
LA Department of Ag & Forestry			Carrie Castille
La Department of Education	Ann Wilson		
LA Department of Environmental Quality	Jan Boydstun		
LA Department of Health and Hospitals			Chasity Cheramie
LA Department of Natural Resources			Linda Pace
LA Department of Wildlife and Fisheries	Brady Carter	Martin Bourgeois	
LA Dept. of Culture, Recreation and Tourism			Karen Leathem
LA Dept. of Economic Development			
LA Forestry Association			
LA Independent Oil & Gas Association			
LA Landowners Association			Timothy Allen
LA Mid Continent Oil & Gas Association	Mike Lyons	Ed Landgraf	
LA Oil Spill Coordinators Office			Brian Wynne David Gisclair
LA Science Teachers Association	Shannon Lafont		
LA Wildlife Federation			
Lafourche Parish		Amanda Penick	
Louisiana Association of Conservation District			
LSU Ag Center & LA Sea Grant	Alan Matherne		Rex Caffey
LUMCON	John Conover		Nancy Rabalais
National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)			Rick Hartman Rachel Sweeney
Nicholls State University	Gary LaFleur	Quenton Fontenot Earl Melancon	
Plaquemines Parish	PJ Hahn	Krista Clark	
Point Coupee Parish			
Sassafras LA	Alex Naquin		
South Central Planning and Development	Kevin Belanger	Martha Cauzabon	

Commission			
South Louisiana Economic Council	Simone Maloz		
St. Charles Parish			
Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government	Al Levron Nic Matherne		
The Nature Conservancy			
U.S. National Park Service	Angela Rathle		
US Coast Guard	Sarah Brennan		
US Corps of Engineers			Susan Hennington
US Environmental Protection Agency	Doug Jacobson		John Ettinger
US Fish & Wildlife Service			Bill Vermillion
USDA/NRCS	Mandy York		Quin Kinler
USGS	Susan Testroet-Bergeron		
Other Guests			
Organization	Representative		
ARCADIS	Ryan Clark		
Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary Foundation	Helen Lafleur		
Bayou Grace Community Services	Diane Huhn Rebecca Templeton		
CH2M Hill	Elizabeth Gibert		
C-K Associates, LLC	Keith Nichols		
Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority	Kenneth Bahlinger		
Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority	Kodi Collins		
Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority	Richard Raynie		
Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority	Gaspar Chifici		
Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority	Dugan Sabins		
Grand Isle Port Commission	Wayne Keller		
Moffatt & Nichol	Jonathan Hird		
Moffatt & Nichol	Paul Tschirky		
Ocean Conservancy	Shelley Sparks (T)		
South Louisiana Wetlands Discovery Center	Jonathan Foret		
UNO – CHART (Center for Hazards Assessment, Response & Technology)	Kristina Peterson		
US Environmental Protection Agency Gulf of Mexico Program	Ben Scaggs		
US Environmental Protection Agency Gulf of Mexico Program	John Bowie		
LSU Student	Kristin Broom		
NSU Student	Patrick Riviere		
U.S. National Park Service	Joe Llewellyn		
U.S. National Park Service	Guy Hughes		
Sassafras LA	Aaron Guidry		
Sassafras LA	Ronnie Collins		

Sassafras LA	Alex Gros		
Sassafras LA	Caroline Guidry		
Sassafras LA	Jeanie Naquin		
Photographer/Artist	Lane Lefort		

**READING AND APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS DATE MEETING**

A motion was made and approved to dispense with the reading of the September 11, 2012 minutes and to accept them as submitted.

**PERSONNEL CHANGES**

Kerry announced that Delaina LeBlanc was hired as the Migratory Bird Coordinator. Delaina has done contract work for BTNEP for a few years but had been recently hired with monies from an agreement with CPRA. He welcomed Delaina to BTNEP team.

**PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

Kerry reviewed agenda items. He noted that the 19 media items included were media items that specifically noted the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program. There were five volunteer events; one where 330 feet of sand fencing was erected at the Grand Isle State Park with a lot of prep work prior to the event. The proceeds from the Spahr’s “Gulf” Tournament would be used for the volunteer program. He stressed the importance of fundraising. BTNEP did not produce the 2013 Bird Calendar due to budget reasons. The 2013 Tidal Graph Calendar – Traditional Fishing Techniques of South Louisiana with Andrew Barron as the project manager was produced with the cost of that publication being in the \$50,000 range. He thanked Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District for their \$5,000.00 donation to help offset the cost and asked the members to consider doing the same.

Kerry briefed everyone about the Louisiana Master Naturalist Program. He explained that Andrew and Michael were instrumental in the program and would have more information later in the meeting.

There were 101 news media interviews specifically mentioning BTNEP.

Kerry introduced Ben Scaggs, Director of the Gulf of Mexico Program. He mentioned that the gulf NEPs have a strong relationship with GOMA. Ben thanked Kerry for the introduction and commented that we have a very savvy leader. He remarked about the strong relationships that have been built with not a lot of resources. It is good to see so many organizations working together. He sits on the NRDA council and feels that when money starts flowing, bankable relationships will be lost and that each agency will begin to go in their own direction. He is hoping that we will be able to treat issues in the gulf on a gulf wide basis.

**SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING DATE**

Al asked everyone to mark their calendars with May 8, 2013 in the Century Room under the NSU stadium for the next scheduled meeting.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- A. Cat Island Project – P.J. Hahn, Plaquemines Parish and F. Ryan Clark, PGeol, ARCADIS U.S., Inc.

[https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/107062585/Cat\\_Island\\_2013\\_01\\_30%20%2362.pptx](https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/107062585/Cat_Island_2013_01_30%20%2362.pptx)

P.J. Hahn discussed the islands in Barataria Bay including what was considered ground zero in relation to the BP oil spill. One island in particular is Cat Island. The oil came through Quatre Bayou Pass during the spill. All of the islands were getting the oil and into Bay Jimmy. As oil was passing through, so many birds became oiled. There were 4.5 acres of lush mangroves – healthy trees began to die with the oil. Photos were taken of the birds. P.J. went out to the islands with John Snell of Fox 8 WVUE New Orleans. They were blown away by how bad the island looked. He has been talking to National Geographic to cover the islands on a national level. Tyrone Turner with National Geographic took photographs of many of the birds oiled during the oil spill. Seventy five percent of all migratory birds pass through the area. Reddish egrets are very rare birds and were oiled during the spill. He provided images of an oiled reddish egret during the oil spill. Rehabilitation of the birds took place in Alabama or Florida and released again with some being released in Louisiana.

P.J. noted the historic land loss from 1935 - 350 acres, 1998 - 40 acres, to 2012 – less than 1 acre. He showed images from 1998 through 2010 and flyover images taken in January 2012 and again in November 2012. He showed Google timeframe images. The images showed boom and some green from the remaining mangroves during the oil spill. The island is losing all vegetation and shell banks were exposed. Most of the islands are disappearing. Apache owned one of the islands and donated it to Plaquemines Parish and that is the island they are currently working on with BTNEP. Pelicans are attempting to nest but will get washed away. Kerry stated that we're going to focus efforts on the last island shown using the 1 million dollars donated from Shell and noted Ed Landgraf from Shell Oil Company.

P.J. stated that the project was not within the coastal plan but very critical considering it is a nesting area for colonial and migratory birds. Colonial and migratory birds choose these islands due to lack of natural predators. Several million dollars are needed to rebuild each island. Garret may rework funds for an existing project then send money to Plaquemines Parish and then the parish would repay.

Ryan stated that Cat Island West is fully permitted and they had received word on Cat Island East yesterday afternoon. They are taking the project to the next phase which is doing an in-depth cost analysis to lower cost. He provided a conceptual rendering of how the island would look. He indicated protection from wave action, a lagoon for wading, a cross-section of reconstructed island, and segmented breakwater to provide additional habitat. Sediment source analysis is being conducted.

A slide of all partners involved in the project was shown. Those included were Shell, Apache, Plaquemines Parish, CIAP, American Bird Conservancy; National Audubon Society, and BTNEP. Three million dollars have been collected so far. More is needed to complete the project but they are driving cost down with the design. P.J. confirmed that they need \$8 million more and that the cheapest way to bring cost down would be by bringing sediment from the river. There are great sand sources from the Mississippi River and offshore shoaling areas. They are looking at the most efficient route for getting the sediment to the islands. P.J. wants to bring the sediment from the river rather than offshore sources. According to P.J., the sediment from the oil spill sand berm project is still there today and could be used. The cost to restore both islands is \$11 million. Each of the islands is less than an acre at this point. The area goal is 8 acres for each island but possibly up to 15 acres depending on the sediment and how well it can be stacked. Birds like the islands because they are remote and lack predators; however, reconstruction of the islands is difficult because they are remote. They can use local fine-grained or Barataria Pass sediment but that would involve barges. Preliminary locations identify Army Corps of Engineers disposal areas at Barataria Pass. Other two are – beneficial use program COE – head of passes or south pass need to coordinate with them to attach to a main dredge program and pump sediment as a beneficial use out of an existing project.

He talked about the commercial sand pit at Hero Canal in Belle Chasse. They mine sand in the river and dry handle it. The plan would be to use barges to transport the sediment down the GIWW and Barataria Pass. The drawbacks

are that this is a long distance and it is expensive. He noted that some people ask, "Why don't we pump sediment locally in the bay and use the sediment beneficially?" The area is heavy with clay and there are oyster leases so this is not an option. He also stated that with sand, we also have less chances of material escaping.

Kenneth Bahlinger stated Mangroves don't grow in the sand. They prefer to grow in fine material like clays. You generally find them growing on the bay sides of barrier islands where the material is fine.

Ryan said that they need a combination of fine grain material and sand combined to stabilize. Kerry felt that in order to stabilize you would need heavy grain and coarse grain sand.

P.J. said that in 1950, we began losing pelicans due to DDT. A program was started on Queen Bess Island. The island was rebuilt and several nesting pairs were brought in. "We hate to see history repeat itself by endangering our state bird." His parish council has asked how this project is protecting homes or people. It is not; however, the islands are a vital resource.

Wayne Keller stated that Mayor Camardelle is doing enhanced dredging of Barataria Pass. P.J. responded that Colonel Moore of the corps is also studying a project to use the "Wheeler" hopper dredge to load barges and bring material in from the river to transport it to near Grand Isle by piggy backing this on to existing projects. This is thinking out of the box. Wayne continued that in the pass, they used sediments locally in the passes to build Fifi Island. They will be going to Washington in March to get the dredge to rebuild Fifi Island this year. They could combine the Cat Islands project and use this dredging project in the passes to provide the sediment.

Doug Jacobson asked about the possibility of building platforms out there for the birds to utilize? P.J. responded that they are scraping the barrel already.

P.J. said that they have been talking with Garret Graves. The state is about to go to court and they felt confident that things are close to being settled as BP would not want to go through a trial. Plaquemines Parish has a law suit too and attorneys are indicating that they are close to settlement but the money is needed now. We can't wait another year as the island is disappearing now. We need to borrow from the state to get started now and then the Parish would repay the state later.

Ryan stated that there is some concern that birds will continue to use the island to nest and high water events will destroy their nests. Patty Holland at US Fish and Wildlife Service has proposed a deterrent plan for the birds for this season. P.J. confirmed that birds are still using the island as they could not walk on it last year because of nests and birds. After Tropical Storm Debby, John Snell from Fox8 News did a story and eggs were scattered with one pelican and its mother coming back to it. It survived.

Ed Landgraf said that Shell donated one million to Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Foundation over a year ago as a good faith effort from the industry. Industry does not understand the waiting game. P.J. felt that if it weren't for Shell, they wouldn't have come this far. They now have others looking to contribute to the project because of Shell. He is confident that they will get this built due to coverage at the national level. We tend to mention land loss in comparison to that of a football field and for some, that is hard to grasp but images of actual land loss is understandable.

Michael Massimi asked how NRDA will play into this. Kerry felt that the State is only trying to get NRDA money for the master plan but NRDA has no impact or obligation to the master plan.

P.J. said that they considered going to Houston to address BP personally. By the time the money gets to us, it could be the end of the year, and the island could be gone. It is critical to get things done as soon as possible and that is why they are working with ARCADIS. One island is on early NRDA according to Ryan.

BP gave one billion to jump start the coast. Two small projects in Louisiana and one in Florida have been approved because BP has to approve each project. They have only approved seven percent of the total money in projects. Ben Scaggs confirmed that the process with NRDA and BP is glacially slow.

Shelley Sparks stated that her impression is that NRDA is looking for the biggest bang for the buck in projects and BP wants the money to go the farthest it can. BP isn't looking at the public relations aspect of this dragging out. They would get all sorts of good will if they just move the process along and fund projects.

Nic Matherne felt that a better option would be the Restore Act. As soon as clear water is settled, parishes don't have to follow master plan.

Al thanked P.J. and Ryan for their presentation.

#### B. Bio Blitz – Angela Rathle

Bio Blitz Project is a new event at the Barataria Preserve. National Geographic helps to sponsor the program each year. The event has been around for 10 years and started at Rock Creek in Maryland.

Goals of the program are to identify as many species as possible in 24 hours, highlight biodiversity, and engage as many members of the public as possible. They want to introduce scientist as they lead teams of other scientists or as many members of the public with scientific backgrounds to do inventory. They want other agencies to learn about the park. They want people to reconnect with nature. By increasing inventory and monitoring, they want scientists to realize that the parks are living labs. Engagement of the general public can reconnect urban areas to natural areas and provide outreach to and visibility to their partner agencies. This is a large effort to try to get an urbanized nation back out into national parks.

She gave reasons why they are really excited to have BIOBLITZ in the Barataria Preserve near historic New Orleans. Those include a wetland ecosystem, an urban national park, excellent staff, and excellent resources. They have an integration of culture and natural history at the Barataria Preserve. In 2016 they will have a call to action to reengage children back into the national parks and back into science.

The major components of BIOBLITZ – festival atmosphere with exhibitor booths, engage school kids and then bring back to base camp. They will feature scientists, social media, and public presentations.

Images of the last BIOBLITZ held in Santa Monica were displayed to form a comparison to ours. She showed a map of base camps. She stressed that they need exhibitors and would like to see members of the Management Conference participating. They are looking for exhibitors, presentations, booths at the festival, people for social media, scientists, and educators (K-12). They are sending letters to schools now in an effort to get the kids out. Examples of what was needed were provided. This will be a 24 hour inventory because of different species inventoried. Goals for participation included 200 scientists, 2,000 science opportunities, 2,000 school kids minimum.

She covered information on how to get involved and encouraged all to visit the park service website for BIOBLITZ. (<http://www.nps.gov/jela/bioblitz-2013-at-jean-lafitte.htm>)

Ann Wilson asked for a blurb for the school groups and a contact person for school groups. Angela confirmed that she would pass this on to Stacy. One child will be selected as a youth ambassador.

Shelley Sparks asked how and when do scientists sign up?

Andrew Barron noted that he would volunteer to do a group for water quality and a cultural program.

It was suggested that they target school systems with Math & Science programs. Sara suggested Facebook and other social media.

C. LDPS - Kenneth Bahlinger

Bayou Dupont Marsh and Ridge Creation started in 2008. Goals were to take sediment out of the Mississippi and bring as far out into the Barataria-Terrebonne Basin as possible and to create a permanent corridor least impacting the environment.

He talked about efforts to move sediment from the river to three areas of the basin and the challenges which included sediment availability, oysters, and pipelines.

Project needs include land rights, permit, money, and available sediment. Partners in LDSP (CIAP) project were Plaquemines, Jefferson, and Lafourche Parishes; and the Bayou Dupont Marsh and Ridge Creation project was NOAA Fisheries (CWPPRA). The projects were combined. Both use the same corridor, landowners, and borrow area. Combining projects should provide cost savings.

He provided project information indicating how many acres of marsh would be created and nourished for each project. Additional slides explained permitting.

Land rights are near completion with two agreements pending. The schedule is set to advertise for bid in the spring, begin dredging in late summer with 1-1/2 to 2 years to complete.

Images of Scofield Island were shown.

Build full barrier island. Using PSD and most of the corridor is water versus land. Kerry asked where they were pulling from. Sediment is from the Mississippi River 5 miles down from Empire. Kerry then asked if there were any problems from the 4 booster pumps and Kenneth responded that there were no problems. It is being done now.

Kerry asked if the Tri Parish Project was taking sediment from the same place as Bayou DuPont. Kenneth responded that it was and confirmed that it is close to being full. Kerry asked if they were having trouble finding sediments due to no real strong deposition areas. Jonathan Hird noted problems with dredging and was reluctant to use borrow at Nairn. Navigation doesn't like dredging on a bend. Navigation doesn't like that sort of thing.

Kerry asked if the pipeline is being left in place. Kenneth replied that they will not buy the pipe but will have long use on the pipe. Kerry asked if it would be cheaper. Kenneth replied that it would be less expensive and would be less of a liability.

Discussion followed regarding owning versus renting. Kenneth stated that they don't want to invest in pipe, they want to invest in the sediment and getting the sediment moving as much as possible. Combining multiple projects is the way to go. Al confirmed that the concept of leaving permanent pipe in not an option. It is cheaper to bid out separate projects. Jonathan – trying to build several projects with one portfolio. Nic suggested attaching projects since there is no such thing as a permanent pipeline. Legal issue is more of an issue than project managers understand. State will close book on leaving pipeline out there.

Jonathan said that we don't want the pipe sitting out idle and inactive. That is where the lawyers make money on the liability.

C. "I remember" - Susan Testroet-Bergeron

Susan asked if anyone in the room remembered sitting on a grandparents lap to hear a story. Lane Lefort was the brain child of this event. Lane is known for his nature photography and it was his idea to capture people who know about wetlands before we don't have it anymore.

Personal invite to Oral History and Art Show on Wednesday, March 13, 2013 at Jean Laffite National Park from 6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Everyone must RSVP as there is room for only 230 people. Eleven people were interviewed. Oil paintings were done by Marian Martinez. She noted that this was a different type of art show – NOMA and OGDEN museums. CWPPRA required the art show to show at a federal location and will be taken to Washington DC.

The show will include QR codes for each person interviewed and will take you to CWPPRA home page. Made a code for each of the people interviewed and use QR codes with young people standing next to each portrait. The keynote address will be from Lt. Governor Jay Dardenne. She would like to show him a warm welcome. He is very big on cultural issues. Partners for the project were BTNEP, The T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History, BTEF, National Park Service and CWPPRA. Everyone was asked to RSVP to Jenny at BTNEP. Pictures and interviews will be stored at the T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History. Images will not be put online until after the shows so that people attend the art show. Lane explained that we want it to be a travelling exhibit - living and in front of people.

D. Louisiana Master Naturalist Program – Andrew Barron and Michael Massimi

Meeting last year for State Master Naturalist Program at LSU Ag Center in Baton Rouge. Michael Massimi and Andrew Barron starting a New Orleans Chapter. Ag Center doesn't have funding now for a State Program. People under Bob Thomas leadership started a 501(c)3 program in New Orleans with six workshop sessions for all people on steering committee. One month from today they are starting next full-length course including 9 (20 hours per course) workshop sessions. There are 150-200 people signed up and this is perfect timing with BIOBLITZ. Twenty volunteer hours with agencies fulfilling volunteer hours. Six hours of advance course are needed to maintain certification. Look for notices. The cost is \$220.00. Kerry asked what the fees were being used for. Fees are being used for guest speakers, travel and transportation. Courses are centered on habitat. Kerry noted that this is good way to generate volunteers for our events. Michael sees it as a natural history program to have restoration as a focal point. Andrew hopes to help people in New Orleans realize that they live on the coast. Agencies will have logos on Louisiana Master Naturalist website.

E. Bayou Lafourche Clean Up – Alma Robichaux

This year's event will be held on Saturday March 2, 2013 from 8:00 a.m. – Noon. This year's sponsors include Keep Louisiana Beautiful and Lafourche Parish Freshwater district. Alma briefly reviewed last year's data and the parishes affect by Bayou Lafourche, and reminded all that it is our water supply.

F. Paddle Bayou Lafourche – Kristy Monier

Kristy reminded everyone that Paddle Bayou Lafourche is April 4-7, 2013 with same itinerary as in the past. She asked everyone to spread the word and/or consider participating. She noted that registration can be done online via the BTNEP website. There were 165 registrants last year and they were hoping to hit that number again.



## G. Other Business

### **Louisiana Nutrient Management Strategy - Rick Raynie from Coastal Protection & Restoration Authority**

Everyone is aware that there is a National Hypoxia Task Force. Garret Graves is the Louisiana representative on that task force and Rick is the alternate. One of its goals is to reduce nutrients throughout the Mississippi/Atchafalaya River Basin in an effort to reduce the size of hypoxia. One of the action items is for each member state to develop a Statewide Management Strategy within this calendar year. There is a collaborative effort between CPRA, LDEQ, LDAF, LDNR since they all have something relative to nutrient management. This is a statewide initiative and does not just focus on the coastal zone. He referenced the fact sheet that he distributed which includes the different parameters. On the back of the fact sheet he noted 10 strategic components of plan. They are currently working on stakeholder engagement by going out to different groups such as BTNEP. They met with business and industry leaders and are meeting with agriculture groups, and are planning to meet with academics and some other non-governmental organizations. Between now and the end of April, they are trying to gather information about what strategies are already in place. They are trying to determine what works and what does not work. What are the things that we know with our programs, what are the ways that we can leverage existing programs to make improvements or incentives, and how can we contribute to improving water quality throughout Louisiana? The website <http://lanutrientmanagement.org/> has been created. Questionnaires for homeowners, business and industry leaders, and academia have been developed but they are still working on agriculture. Contact information was also provided on the fact sheet that was distributed. Additional meetings will be set up in the future but for now, they are gathering information.

They are going to use many of the tools that are already developed. USGS has both a national level model and a regional model that looks at not only nitrogen and phosphorus loads but also sources of those loads. They are looking at status trends within basin and sub basin levels to identify the major causes of nutrient pollution within the state. Louisiana is so diverse in terms of agriculture and industry. There is not one solution that is going to fit everyone everywhere. They are really trying to get around the state to talk to groups. He asked that everyone please visit the website and send an email to provide input. They are trying to get all of the stakeholder input by the end of April then take a few months with the team to analyze the information and consider input received to put together a strategy that could be considered for a mini coastal master plan. It is going to be a living document with lots of recommendations. All groups will try to participate in this at the end.

Kerry asked how this meshes with the LDEQ nutrient reduction that we've had for years. We know where the nutrient problems are and we know that it's mainly non-point source nutrients. He noted the Lake Verret and Lake Des Allemands basin. Earlier that week BTNEP had a meeting on Lake Fields and to reduce the nutrients in the Bayou Folse watershed.

Rick responded that they are not trying to reinvent the wheel. They are working with all the local DEQ and noted working with Jan and Carrie Castile and others on all the best management practices they've developed. They are incorporating all of the things that have already been done. They are also looking at diversions and their capacity to remove nutrients from the waters.

Kerry asked if they are looking at wetland redirection of project pumps.

Andrew asked if they were looking at regulatory standards. Rick replied that they were not looking at any regulatory programs. They are trying to work with voluntary programs. They are trying to show progress and trying to show different incentives in the absence of additional regulations.

Nic asked if they will expand funding on LDEQ water monitoring programs. Rick replied that they can put together a collective plan that gives more weight for potential funding.

Kris noted that the farm bill still has not been approved and asked if any of the committees work with the farm bill part of the group. Rick replied that they are working very closely with NRCS. Scott Edwards is helping to provide data.

Herman questioned if there is historical data to show the progress being made. DEQ does have data that has shown improvements but has not received a lot of recognition. One component of this program is to see if they can show or communicate reductions in water quality.

Joe from the park service asked if there was a web site that showed maps of hot spots around the state. Rick confirmed that there is and it also shows areas that DEQ is focusing on.

Andrew noted that this is a great effort and commended DEQ and CPRA for getting involved but also wanted to know why. Rick explained that the driving force for the members' states of that task force is the task force. Garret Graves is part of the task force related to diversions. They have been doing stuff with Davis Pond and Caernarvon and we are trying to gather data on impacts for nutrient reductions through diversions. There is a potential to have some interstate coordination to offer nutrient trading among states.

Dugan added that it is important for Louisiana to show strong support for states in the upper basin where we know a lot of the nutrients come from. This adds a strong hand working up river and give support for coastal restoration. He stressed that it is important that other states show support.

Lily Zhou asked why the focus on nutrients instead of overall water quality. She was told that the focus on nitrogen and phosphorus is driven by the Hypoxia Task Force. They are requiring states to develop a management plan for nitrogen and phosphorus and how it relates to hypoxia and that is not saying in the future that is can't be expanded.

Kerry stated that we should focus of using the nutrients removed through diversion and removal of those nutrients through wetlands but that our nutrient issues with in the Barataria-Terrebonne basin is unrelated to diversions. We have that problem now. We don't want to focus totally on water diversion and removing nutrients out of the Mississippi River. We need to focus on in-basin sources.

Jan responded that through the LDEQ over the last two years they have written over 750 TMDLs that show exactly where those problems are. They can't focus on 200 water bodies at one time but they can focus on 40 to show measureable improvements and that is the goal for the state. Other TMDLs have been done; they are working on watershed implementation plans, working with watershed coordinators to do additional monitoring. There is a lot of coordination to attempt to solve those problems. The whole purpose of looking at the Bayou Folsse area is because it is a competent system to review pumping and how it delivers nutrients. She also noted that water body by water body, system by system that all of the problems were different. They all have solutions but that takes funding. Kerry reiterated that he understands the process but he did not want those in attendance to believe that it was all from the Mississippi River. Rick stressed the task force is looking state wide and not at just the Mississippi River.

### **BTEF Foundation – Earl Melancon**

The Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary Foundation is the private arm to help support the BTNEP. The BTEF can accept monetary donations to the program. The BTEF Board is a voluntary board. He introduced Helen LaFleur as the Foundation Coordinator. Helen served as a contractor in the past but has been hired as a full-time employee. Her

office is in the BTNEP office. She will help with projects and is assigned to help with needs of BTNEP. He explained the funding for her position.

### **Buras High School Reef in Brenton Sound – Ed Landgraf**

Ed Landgraf announced that the Buras High School Reef in Brenton Sound will be available for fishing this spring. Buras High School was destroyed in Hurricane Katrina. The Coastal Conservation Association was able to work out a deal with the parish to use materials from the demolished building to create a new fish habitat. Also, CCA in partnership with Shell Oil Company is working on the Floating Islands Restoration Project in Terrebonne Parish on April 19 and 20th at Isle de Jean Charles.

### **Nutria Rodeo - Alex Naquin**

Alex Naquin was in attendance representing Sassafras Louisiana. He introduced Caroline Guidry, a senior from South Lafourche High School. She informed everyone about their 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Nutria Rodeo on March 23, 2013 at Larose Regional Park from 2:00-7:00 p.m. She gave a brief explanation about the event and asked for participants and exhibitors. Alex Gros a sophomore from South Lafourche High School spoke next. Sassafras is trying to incorporate the inclusion of the lionfish into rodeos like tarpon rodeo and sponsor it. Lionfish are becoming a growing problem in the gulf region. They asked that people contact them regarding the rodeo and the lionfish issue. The website is <http://www.sassafrasla.org/>.

### **A Catalog of Louisiana's Nesting Seabird Colonies – Richard DeMay**

Richard DeMay completed a new technical publication that deals with colonial seabirds across the state. It is a compilation of all the information from the 1970s through the latest survey in 2008. It presents information on each colony to include the number of birds and each species through time. He has a few for distribution but reminded everyone that it is a technical document for a technical audience who deal with management of these sea birds.

The meeting adjourned at noon.

