

Management Conference
Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program

*MC Meeting #12
9:30 AM November 18, 1999
Plantation Room
Student Union
Nicholls State University Campus
Thibodaux, LA*

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Windell Curole, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

I. A. Roll-Call

The roll was called and the following members were present:

Randy Robichaux, for Don Briggs-Louisiana Independent Oil & Gas Assoc.
Rex Caffey, for Dr. Paul Coreil, LSU Ag Center
Jim Rives, LA Department of Natural Resources
Edmond Russo-US Army Corps of Engineers
Gus Varvaro, for Alvin Hebert-Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District
Wayne Martin, for Grady Galliano- Lafourche Parish
Windell Curole-LA Association of Levee Boards
Wallace Ellender-American Sugar Cane League
Loulan Pitre-Greater Lafourche Port Commission
Ronnie Wascom- LA Department of Environmental Quality
Lonnie Serpas, for John Scurich, - Plaquemines Parish
Quin Kinler, for Donald Gohmert-USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Rebecca Tedford, for Roland Guidry-Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinators Office
Molly Wike- US Coast Guard
Vic Lafont-South Louisiana Economic Council
Mike Lyons-Mid-Continent Oil & Gas Assoc.
Donna Lombardo, for Earl Matherne-St. Charles Parish
Dr. Earl Melancon-Nicholls State University
Pam Roussel, for Kevin Belanger-South Central Planning & Development Commission
Diane Lindstedt, for Rick Hartman-US National Marine Fisheries Service
Monica Young-US EPA
Butch Stegall-LA Department of Agriculture and Forestry
Jean May Brett-Louisiana Science Teachers Association
Vince Guillory, for Glenn Thomas-LA Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries
Jason Smith, for Marnie Winter-Jefferson Parish

Those absent were:

Jimmy Antoon-LA Dept. of Health & Hospitals
Len Bahr-Governor's Office for Coastal Activities
Phil Boydston-Louisiana Landowner's Assoc.
Paul Cancienne-Assumption Parish
Michael Dagg-LUMCON
Donald Lirette-Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana
Dennis Demcheck-US Geological Survey
Dave Fruge-US Fish & Wildlife
Ron Harrell-Louisiana Farm Bureau
Randy Lanctot-Louisiana Wildlife Federation
Al Levron-Terrebonne Parish

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Peter Vujnovich-Commercial Fisheries
Cecil Picard-LA Dept. of Education
Marylee Orr-Louisiana Environmental Action Network
Johnnie Dikes-LA Dept. of Economic Development
Brad Spicer-Louisiana Association of Conservation Districts
Doug Svendsen-Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association
Charles Caplinger-Coastal Conservation Assoc. of Louisiana

BTNEP Staff Present:

Kerry St. Pe'
Sandra Kendrick
Deborah Schultz
Dean Blanchard
Eddie Landrum
Rachel Somers

Guests Present:

Betty Ashley-EPA
Cullen Curole-BT Estuary Foundation
Kirk Cheramie-BT Estuary Foundation
Lynnette Cortez-BT Estuary Foundation
Pat Bergeron-Environmental Safety & Health Consultants
Rod Emmer-Rodney Emmer & Assoc.
Fred Kopfler-Gulf of Mexico Program

Windell Curole made the following announcements to the Management Conference:

- 1) Loulan Pitre, Vice-President of the MC, has been elected as the Representative of the South Lafourche/Grand Isle area to the Legislature. Windell stated that one of Loulan's biggest planks in his platform was dealing with environmental issues. Loulan addressed the MC and stated that the things the MC does were at the core of what he ran on. He also stated that he was told that he was the first candidate to ever run for the Legislature and make coastal issues a major part of his platform.
- 2) Digitization of Map Exhibit-Joe Suhayda, LSU, did some digitizing of maps of Louisiana from 1839 and 1870. These maps show how gigantic a land loss we have had in our area. These maps were on display along with the Shellfish Challenge Poster Session that Eddie Landrum had submitted at the ERF '99 Conference in New Orleans.
- 3) Windell stated that there is a move to push for a major diversion channel. He stated that the program office would like the MC to support this concept. He stated that business organizations are ready to put up money to make sure that certain things get done and make a big difference.

I.B. Reading and Approval of Minutes of the August 19, 1999 Meeting

It was moved to dispense of the reading of and approve the minutes, a member of the Management Conference seconded the motion.

I.C. Program Activities

- ❖ **Personnel Changes**-Rachel Somers-Delta Service Corp; Lynnette Cortez-BTEF Secretary; Richard DeMay-IPA with USGS, Amy Eliser-student worker, graduating and resigning
- ❖ **Presentations/Exhibits**: Knights of Columbus; Basin Tour for Gulf of Mexico Program Staff; Basin Tour for National Park Service Staff; Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District Meeting; Lockport Fire Department; US Coast Guard; Russian Delegation; WEFTEC; Ducks Unlimited Banquets/ Ocean Commotion; St. Mary Catholic School
- ❖ **Media Interviews**: *The Courier*-Bayou Lafourche Initiative and La Fete d'Ecologie; KTIB Radio Dialogue; *New York Times*-Estuary Bill
- ❖ **Meetings**: Mississippi River Commission Lower Delta Trip; ASWM Workshop Advisory Committee; ERF

Conference & Teacher Workshops; Invasive Species in Ballast Water Meeting; Coastal Revegetation Research Program; Coast 2050 Feasibility Study Technical Steering Committee; EMPACT; ANEP/NEP Conference;

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- ❖ Alternative Sewage Treatment Meeting; Davis Pond Advisory Committee Meeting; Bayou Lafourche Heritage Corridor Meeting
- ❖ NOAA Excellence Awards for Coastal and Ocean Resource Management/Houma-Terrebonne Chamber of Commerce

I.D. Set Date for 13th Management Conference Meeting

It was motioned by Jean May Brett and seconded by Quinn Kinler to hold the 13th Management Conference Meeting February 17, 2000. Kerry asked the MC if it would be advisable to send a reminder of this meeting date soon after this dates meeting. Jean May Brett said it was very advisable especially for those MC members who are not present at this meeting.

II. ACTION ITEMS

II. A. Request for Proposals: “Booklet on Oil and Produced Water Spill Prevention and Early Detection”

Dean Blanchard stated that this RFP was developed and steered by the Oil Spill Prevention Action Plan Team. He stated that this booklet is designed to put an emphasis on spill prevention and showing examples that it is less costly and less environmentally damaging to do prevention instead of clean up. Dean stated that he was looking for approval of the RFP. Mike Lyons motioned to approve the RFP and Molly Wike seconded it. There was no further discussion and it was accepted as presented. Dean asked that if anyone knew of any potential contractors, to please contact him.

II.B. Clawdette’s For True or What? Draft Drawings

Dean Blanchard stated that these drawings were designed to be an educational tool. He stated the contractor took facts from the Characterization Report and made drawings from them. Dean also stated that once drawings are fully developed, they could be distributed to mass media, as well as used on posters and coloring books. Jean May Brett stated she had numerous comments that she would turn over to Dean. She stated that the themes are not carried through on all three panels. She stated that if the theme was carried through, it would be a sounder educational piece. Kerry stated that program staff noticed that too, and that changes given to contractor were not incorporated into this second draft. Deborah stated that there were grammatical changes also that were not incorporated into this draft. Vince Guillory asked where the text for these drawings came from. Dean stated that the contractor supposedly took the text from the Characterization Report, however; Vince stated that he did not believe that and that he would get with Dean to discuss his comments. Herman Waguespack stated that a central thought needs to be enforced and to make sure that something is not implied that we don’t necessarily want to imply, in the drawings, characters or what is said. He also stated that we need to stick with the facts. Diane Lindstedt asked how these drawings would be used. Dean stated that they would be used for newspaper columns, posters, and possibly a coloring book. Herman asked what is the projected date to complete this project and Dean stated he believed the contract ends in six months. Windell asked MC members to volunteer to be on the Action Plan Team for this project. Herman Waguespack, Jean May Brett, Vince Guillory and Diane Lindstedt volunteered. Jean May Brett asked that given this level of concern, would it be appropriate to approve these drawings at this time. Herman Waguespack motioned to table the approval of these drawings until all comments could be incorporated. Jean May Brett seconded the motion.

II.C. 3rd Annual La Fete d’Ecologie Final Report

Sandra Kendrick stated that the Program staff felt this year’s festival was a huge success. She stated that there were approximately 4,500 to 5,000 people. Cullen Curole presented the Final Report. He stated that there were in fact 4,500 to 5,000 estuary residents at the festival with approximately 500 children participating in the Treasure Hunt game. He stated that the Foundation did a lot of the work themselves, instead of contracting out, and he said that in itself was successful. He stated that having a secretary was a key element in having a successful festival. Jason Smith stated that he was very impressed with the festival. He stated that he had never seen as many kids participate in any event that Jefferson Parish has ever been apart of as he did at the festival. Sandra then gave a Power Point presentation showing highlights of the Festival. It was motioned and seconded to accept the Final Report as submitted.

II.D. Scope of Services for the 4th Annual La Fete d’Ecologie: Barataria-Terrebonne

Sandra Kendrick stated that next year's festival will be held on Saturday, October 7, 2000 (National Estuaries Day). She stated that the contract term had been extended to a full year so that the contractor could get a head start. She also stated

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that the amount of the contract was decreased from \$48,000 to \$40,000. She stated that a change needed to be made on page 5 of the scope of services. The sentence that states that the state will put up a 25% match needs to be deleted. The festival's purpose is to promote community outreach and citizen involvement in BT issues; to encourage broad citizen and community participation in developing and producing the event; to showcase the BTE as a local, state and national treasure; to educate the public about estuary issues; and to demonstrate public support for conserving and restoring the basins.

II.E. Scope of Services for "Development of Wetland Education Workshop and Enhancement of WETMAAP Website for the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program Study Site"

Deborah Schultz stated that the objective of this project is to introduce educators to functions and values of wetlands, wetland mapping, digital databases, and GIS technology; to assist educators with the integration of wetland loss issues into existing curriculum; to promote public awareness of wetland loss issues and provide an understanding of the cause and effect of wetland change using a specific case study. Molly Wike motioned that this scope be approved as presented and Quin Kinler seconded. There was no further discussion.

II.F. Draft Report: The Wetland Functions and Values of the Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary System

Deborah Schultz stated that this report is the last component of the Wetlands Education program contracted to the Cooperative Extension Service in 1996. The intent is to convey the economic and functional benefits of wetland habitats within the estuary. The document also gives a good overview of the economic value of other land use activities in the estuary, as well as conveying the threats to wetlands and restoration efforts within this region. Mike Lyons stated that if this document could somehow be tied into Mary Landrieu's OCS bill, it would boost her efforts as well as BTNEP's. Vic Lafont stated that The Wetlands Functions and Values document is a good tool to bring to the Legislature to show what we would lose in an economic perspective. Vic stated that what he doesn't see anymore is industry getting blamed for the problems, although they know they contributed to the problems over the decades. Kerry stated that we have all contributed to the problems. Vic stated that attitude is not there anymore. So he's finding it easier to talk to legislatures and agency people about the problems and how industry can help with the solutions. Vic stated that in a recent telephone conversation with a developer, he realized that not only is our industrial base threatened, but our commercial base is also. He stated that he now

realizes that his competition is not foreign countries, but it is the environment. Kerry stated that the program has been waiting for support from all of the groups in this area and he feels that we are very close to that now. Vic asked that if anyone has any ideas on how the South Louisiana Economic Council can get industry to help organizations like BTNEP to promote awareness of the estuary, to please let him know. Kerry stated that what BTNEP is here to do is to provide tools and information, like the Wetlands Functions and Values, to the public and private industry to make them aware of the value of the estuary. Kerry stated that what we need from groups such as SLEC and Mid-Continent Oil & Gas Assoc. is to get this information to the political establishment. Mike Lyons repeated the industry has been blamed for wetland loss, but then stated that anyone who lives in this area is to blame. He stated that now industry is not getting the finger pointed at them anymore as they were a decade ago. He stated that yes the oil industry caused wetland loss, but they are not the only cause and not the main

cause. Data produced by scientists supports that. The oil industry, he said, supports the no net loss policy. Mike stated that the money that comes from Mary Landrieu's bill would come from the oil industry to pay for solutions to wetland loss. Kerry stated that he would like to think that the estuary program is the forefront of that attitude change. Kerry stated that the program staff needs to know where we need to be used. He stated that the MC needs to understand that each individual and their organization they represent is part of the program. He asked that they don't wait for the staff to jump on opportunities, because the program office usually does not hear about those opportunities. He asked the MC to please let program office know where we can utilize our Windell stated that the Extension Agents should be used also to funnel out BTNEP information. Kerry stated that there are Action Plan Teams that anyone from industry could get involved with, for example, the Oil Spill Prevention Action Plan Team. Deborah Schultz stated that although the title of the document is Wetlands Functions & Values, BTNEP and the Cooperative Extension Service went beyond that by giving information on other economic activities that are important in the estuarine system. Mike Lyons motioned to accept this draft and Quin

Kinler seconded. There was no further discussion.

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II.G. Proposed Changes to the BTMC Operational Procedures

Kerry St. Pé indicated to the MC that a subcommittee, which consisted of Windell Curole, Loulan Pitre and Kerry, discussed and made some changes to the Operational Procedures. Kerry stated that in the document that was in the packet, he has the proposed deletions in brackets and additions are in bold and italics. Kerry stated that he took this opportunity to update the procedures and bring them into the implementation phase. He stated that as a result of the committee's consensus, he devised the procedures so that if a member of the BTMC in, what he calls, good standing fails to attend two consecutive quarterly meetings, then that group's representation will become probational. Kerry stated that the thinking here is that the member has the opportunity to appoint as many alternates as they want, so therefore, there should not be a reason why that organization cannot attend two consecutive meetings. Probational means that if a representative attends the third meeting, after missing two consecutive meetings, that group is not counted towards the quorum. The member or alternate must attend the third and fourth meeting or else that organization forfeits their membership on the BTMC. A letter of notification will be sent to the primary member, reminding them that if a representative from their group does not attend the next two meetings, their membership will be forfeited. Jean May Brett suggested that, once the next meeting date was decided, that a meeting notice reminder be sent out to all MC members soon after date is set. This reason being that those MC members who were not at last meeting could put the date for next meeting on their calendars. She also stated that it might be a good idea to set the third Thursday of each quarter as a regular meeting date. This agenda item was tabled to incorporate changes suggested by the MC.

III. DISCUSSION ITEMS

III.A. Update on Alternative Sewage Methods Contract

Deborah Schultz gave progress report on this contract. A workshop was held to select a demonstration project. It was decided to explore the possibility of using the marsh upwelling system in a freshwater area.

III.B. Update on Delta Service Corp Projects

Rachel Somers gave a brief overview of the presentations and projects that she is currently working on. She stated that one project is a wetlands coloring book and that she has a review team that consists of local schoolteachers.

III. C. Update on Migratory Bird Poster

Dean Blanchard presented to the MC the current draft of the Migratory Bird Poster. Dean stated that more changes would be made before the final poster is approved. Quin Kinler asked who the contractor was for the graphics of the poster. Sandra Kendrick stated that Lisa Pond and John Sneed at LSU were doing the work for BTNEP.

III. D. FY 2000/2001 Gulf of Mexico Program Project Planning Meeting Summary

Fred Kopfler gave a summary of project planning meeting that was held on NSU Campus on September 14, 1999.

III. E. Jefferson Parish Christmas Tree Project

Kerry stated that there would be an upcoming luncheon to celebrate the 10-year anniversary of the Christmas Tree Project. Jason Smith, of the Jefferson Parish Environmental Dept., gave a presentation on the parish's award winning project. Jason stated that his job with Jefferson Parish is to make sure that Christmas Tree Projects are completed. Jason stated that the luncheon would be held on November 29th. Jason stated that a priority of his is to get new people involved with the project and that is a challenge. He also stated that a success with the project is that a lot of the participants are volunteer efforts. Therefore, allowing them to stretch the grant as far as they can. He stated that this is a great tool to get kids aware of coastal erosion. Not only do they learn to recycle, but also that the Christmas trees can be used as a device to protect our marshlands. He stated that the project concentrates on low energy areas. He stated that there are roughly 34 shoreline sites and 5 dead-end canal sites. He explained that the first phase of the project consists building cribs, which are 3 feet wide by 150' in length, which is tied into the shoreline with a 6-foot break in between each 150' section. The cribs are made of wood. The second phase of the project is collecting the trees. Trees are collected from St. Tammany,

Plaquemine and Jefferson parishes, or from anyone who wants to donate their tree. Roughly 40 to 50 thousand trees are collected. Jason explained that 350 to 450 high school students donate four weekends of their time for this project, as well as people from other state agencies, environmental groups and other volunteer groups. Texaco donates the use of barges to transport the trees out to the site. He stated that this project gets a lot of media attention. He **BTMC Meeting**

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stated that since 1991, one half million trees have been recycled. The monitoring part of the project consists of laying out shoreline markers and measuring vegetative growth between the shoreline and the cribs. Jason then showed various slides denoting progress at different project sites. Jason stated that he had flyers available to anyone with dates of the next Christmas Tree bundling effort and asked that everyone takes one and brings it back to their organizations and put it in their newsletters in order to spread the word.

III. F. Coast 2050 Feasibility Study

Edmond Russo, USACOE, gave a presentation entitled "Coast 2050: Toward a Sustainable Coastal Louisiana". Edmonds presentation covered the following topics: 1) Coast 2050; 2) the concept of ecosystem restoration studies; 3) an over view of the first study: Barataria Basin; and 4) future study basins of BTNEP region. He stated that the objectives of Coast 2050 are 1) to create/sustain marsh by accumulating sediment; 2) to maintain estuarine gradient for habitat diversity; 3) to maintain ecosystem linkages for exchange of energy and organisms. Edmond then explained the groundwork that expedited the start of the feasibility study. There was discussion about the project selection process. Quin Kinler asked how the projects were prioritized. Tom Podany, of the US Army Corps of Engineers, explained that the Coast 2050 planning teams prioritized the projects. Quin pointed out that he was on one of the planning teams and ha and other members of the team were not involved in the prioritization process. There was further discussion between other MC members and Corps representatives. It was learned that only a subset of the planning teams were used in the selection of the priority projects. Kerry offered the use of the BTMC as a mechanism to assists with the consensus building objectives of the selection of projects. Tom assured the MC that they would be used in the future.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

Eddie Landrum invited the MC members to take a look at the Shellfish Challenge Poster Session that he submitted at the Environmental State of the State Conference in New Orleans, on November 5th.

He also informed the MC of the upcoming workshop on the stormwater redirection and assessment. He asked for volunteers to take a look at some of the assessment of monitoring processes associated with the stormwater redirection. He stated that at the present they are looking at a site in Pointe au Chein Wildlife Management area where the parish is in the process of building a new pump station.

Also, he informed the MC that Terrebonne Parish has approved over \$1 million in community development funds to upgrade the sewage system in Chauvin as a direct result of the sewage workshop that BTNEP sponsored back in November of 1998.

Eddie then stated that in March of 2000, there would be a WEFTEC conference on disinfection of waste. The shellfish assessment processing will be a part of that conference. He stated that he has been a part of the development of the program and asked if anyone interested in getting involved, there will be a tour of the shellfish processing areas that they will be able to participate in.

Kerry stated that the video "America's Vanishing Treasure" is an advanced copy, however, a sleeve is in the process of being designed. It will be duplicated and distributed in the same way as our other videos.

V. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

