

**Management Conference
Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program**

**MC Meeting #21
9:30 AM January 24, 2002
Century Room
John L. Guidry Stadium
Nicholls State University Campus
Thibodaux, LA**

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Roll Call

Management Conference Members Present:

Kenneth Hemphill, for James Antoon-LA Dept. of Health & Hospitals
Cynthia Duet, for Dr. Len Bahr-Governor's Office for Coastal Activities
Tim Allen-Louisiana Landowner's Association
Randy Robichaux, for Don Briggs-LA Independent Oil & Gas Association
David Bourgeois, for Dr. Paul Coriel-LSU Ag Center
Jim Rives-LA Dept. of Natural Resources
Sue Hawes, for Col. Thomas Julich-US Army Corp of Engineers
Archie Chaisson, for Alvin Hebert-Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District
Jess Curole- Lafourche Parish CZM
Windell Curole-LA Association for Levee Boards
Jessie Kastler, for Dr. Mike Dagg- LUMCON
Donald Lirette-Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana
Dennis Demcheck-US Geological Survey
Wallace Ellender- American Sugar Cane League
Loulan Pitre-Greater Lafourche Port Commission
Gerald Bodin, for David Fruge-US Fish & Wildlife Service
Andrew Barron, for David Hughes-LA Dept. of Environmental Quality
Gene Loupe, for Donald Gohmert-USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service
Christina Swaye, for Roland Guidry-Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinator's Office
Ron Harrell-LA Farm Bureau
Lori Szczecina, for Vic Lafont-South Louisiana Economic Council
Ann Wilson, for Cecil Picard-LA Dept. of Education
Mike Lyons-LA Mid-Continent Oil & Gas Association
Gary LaFleur, for Earl Melancon-Nicholls State University
Anne Perry-LA Dept. of Economic Development
Pam Roussell, for Kevin Belanger-South Central Planning & Development Commission
Rick Hartman-US National Marine Fisheries Service
Doug Jacobsen, for Jerry Clifford-US EPA
John Woodard, for Brad Spicer-LA Association of Conservation Districts
Butch Stegall-LA Dept. of Ag & Forestry
Jean May-Brett-LSTA
Heather Finley, for Glenn Thomas-LA Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries
Vickie Dufforc, for Marnie Winitier-Jefferson Parish Environmental Dept.
David Muth-National Park Service

21st Management Conference Minutes
January 24, 2002
Page 2

Organizations not present:

Assumption Parish
Plaquemines Parish
US Coast Guard
LA Dept. of Culture, Recreation & Tourism
Louisiana Wildlife Federation
Terrebonne Parish
Commercial Fisheries
St. Charles Parish
Louisiana Environmental Action Network
Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association
Coastal Conservation Association of LA

Guests Present:

John Saia-US Army Corp of Engineers
Cullen Curole-BTEF
Jerome Zeringue-Terrebonne Levee & Conservation District
Roy Francis-LA 1 Coalition
Katina Gaudet-The Daily Comet
Randolph Joseph-NRCS
Beverly Etheridge-US EPA
Rod Emmer-Governor's Committee on the Future of Coastal LA
Herman Waguespack-American Sugarcane League
Melanie Boulet-AmeriCorp on the Bayou
Scott Wilson-USGS
Angela Rathle-National Park Service
Steve Smith-T. Baker Smith & Sons

Staff Present:

Kerry St. Pe'
Richard DeMay
Dean Blanchard
Eddie Landrum
Leslie McVeigh
Deborah Schultz
Sandra Helmuth

B. Reading and Approval of Minutes of the October 16, 2001 meeting

A motion was made by Jean May-Brett and seconded by Mike Lyons to dispense of the reading of the minutes and to accept the minutes as written.

C. Program Activities (since October 16, 2001)

- ❖ **Personnel Changes** Leslie McVeigh-Community Relations Coordinator, Patrick Cantin-student worker
- ❖ **Presentations/Exhibits**-Local Coastal Programs; Environmental State of the State; Dr. Earl Melancon's Marine Biology Class; Back to the Bayou Pirogue Trip; Ducks Unlimited Banquet; UNO National Outreach Strategy Meeting; Thibodaux Elementary; EPA/NPS Conference; Louisiana Science Teacher Assoc. Conference; Elysian Field Elementary School; Assoc. of American Law Schools Bayou Lafourche Tour

21st Management Conference Minutes

January 24, 2002

Page 3

- ❖ **Media Interviews-Courier**-Morganza to the Gulf, **KTIB**-Back to the Bayou Pirogue Trip; **KNOE Monroe**-Bayou Lafourche Tour
- ❖ **Meetings**-Eco-Science Resources; Groundwater Advisory Committee; Groundwater Management Committee; Clean Gulf Conference; CWWPRA Task Force; EPA/NEP Meeting-St. Petersburg, FL; Americorp on the Bayou Advisory Council; GMPO Public Health Focus Team; May Day Planning Meeting; UNO Public Speaking Competition; CREST; Community Culture and the Environment Workshop Planning Meeting; Governor's Conference-Laplace; Marsh Dieback Syndrome Mid-Project Workshop; GMPO Public Relations Committee Meeting; EPA Region VI staff meeting-Dallas, TX;

Donald Lirette suggested BTNEP do a contract to hire someone to put on tours to relieve the staff. Kerry stated that Leslie will be the person to assist with those tours but he does agree that funds need to be put aside to pay for any expenses that may arise. Donald made a motion that the program staff looks into funding to be set a side in each workplan to fund any expenses incurred. Gary Lafleur seconded. There was no further discussion and no objections. The motion was passed by acclamation.

D. Set Date for 22nd Management Conference Meeting

The program staff suggested April 18, 2002. It was suggested that the meeting be held in Baton Rouge. Loulan Pitre offered to find a place but the Legislative session will be going on then.

Kerry asked if everyone was getting notice of the next meeting. He suggested that a postcard be developed to send to the MC reminding them of the meeting. It was asked if the program office uses the LA Coast News Flash to get the word out. Sandra stated yes, notice of the meeting and an agenda is sent to Gabrielle Bodin.

April 18th was approved for the next meeting.

II. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Project Updates

Staff members will give updates on the following projects:

Dean Blanchard:

- Development of the Environmental Indicators Program for the BTNEP- Dean reminded the MC that a workshop was held last year where first draft of indicators were chosen. A draft report has been sent to the review team and most of the comments have been received. There is a small problem with the fisheries indicators. He stated that there are so many species and factors that effect population. Another meeting will be held with the LA Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries to decide which species to use as indicators. After that decision has been made, and another draft reviewed by the team, the final report will be developed for the public.
- Influence of Chopper-Harvested Green Cane Residue Blankets on Sugarcane Production and Agriculture Runoff-Dean informed the MC that the contract for this project has finally been issued. This project involves excess residue of harvested sugarcane that is left on the ground for the next years crop. This project will look at the factors that are allowing the harvest to yield more when the residue is left on the ground.
- Jefferson Parish Local Permit Information and Training Center-Dean stated that the contract has been issued. This project involves a training center for anyone needing to get a wetland permits, along with other types of permits. An office has been opened and computer equipment has been ordered.

21st Management Conference Minutes
January 24, 2002
Page 4

- An Accelerated Program of Woody Species Selection for Conservation, Restoration, and Neotropical Habitat Enhancement- Dean stated that this project will develop a woody species that will grow in certain wetland habitats and help wetland managers diversify the wildlife habitats. Ten species are currently being looked at. Nine out of the ten have germinated into seedlings. They will be planted in early summer and monitored.

Eddie Landrum:

- Pointe aux Chene Stormwater Project: Eddie stated that a contract has been issued with LSU. This pumpstation is 90% completed and will be online by the end of 2002.
- Shellfish Challenge Web pages-Eddie informed the MC that the web pages are in draft form and need to be reviewed before put on the web. Eddie asked for volunteers to be on that review team.
- Clean Marina Guide-Eddie stated that he will have a draft of the guide within the next 3 weeks.

Deborah Schultz:

- STEPS (Students and Teachers as Educational Partners in Science)-Deborah stated that this workshop is scheduled for February 15-17th at LUMCON. Jessie Kastler will be leading this workshop with the topic of nutrient enrichment.
- WETMAAP (Wetlands Education for Teachers using Maps and Aerial Photography): Deborah stated that this workshop will also be held at LUMCON for 3 days.
- Development and Implementation of Educator Workshops for BTNEP: This contract was delayed in DEQ for a year, then issued. Then the contractor was down with a serious illness but is better now and will begin the work with assistance from Jean May-Brett and Jessie Kastler
- Coastal Roots:BTNEP is funding 6 schools to grow plants to be used in vegetative plantings around the estuary. Deborah informed the MC that David Bourgeois, with LSU Ag, has just won the USDA Secretary's Honor Award for Maintaining and Enhancing Natural Resources for working with this project.
- Bayou Lafourche Initiative

Back to the Bayou Pirogue Trip: Deborah stated that there were several MC members who participated in this trip. It was a great success and will be an ongoing event. She also stated that KLRZ broadcast live from a pirogue.

Community Culture and the Environment: A workshop was held last weekend at LUMCON. Participants of the workshop did exercises to determine what the culture really is along Bayou Lafourche as a means of influencing people's behavior environmentally.

- Oil Story: Deborah reminded the MC of a presentation given by Dr. Diane Austin at an earlier MC meeting where she gave details of a project that entails gathering information about the oil industry in the area and how it affect the lives of area residents.
- Catherine Richardelle's presentations: Deborah informed the MC that Catherine, who is the

Environmental Chair of the Assoc. of Family and Community Education, has put together a presentation on landloss. Catherine has given several dozen of these presentations for her group, schools and civic organizations.

21st Management Conference Minutes

January 24, 2002

Page 5

- May Day Take Back the Coast statewide campaign: Deborah informed the MC that this campaign was a brainstorm of Melanie Boulet. This campaign will be a grassroots statewide show of environmental stewardship. The Governor's Office has recognized this effort and Deborah hopes that Jean May-Brett and Jessie Kastler will assist in getting educator's involved. People from every sector of the communities will be asked to demonstrate environmental stewardship by getting involved in some activity that protects the environment. A website will be developed with funding from the Office of Coastal Activities. The website address is www.lamayday.net. The website will have activity ideas for every sector that will be involved. May Day will be May 10th and 11th.

B. Newly Executed Contracts

Staff members gave a give brief over view on the following newly executed contracts since the last MC Meeting.

Richard DeMay

- DIMS contract: Richard stated that this contract will continue with USGS but excluding the website maintenance and the contractor will work out of Baton Rouge
- Web Design contract: Richard informed the MC that a contract was developed to hire Wendy French, with CK & Associates to maintain the website.

C. Morganza to the Gulf Presentation

Jerome Zeringue, Executive Director of the Terrebonne Levee & Conservation District, gave an update on the Morganza to the Gulf project. Jerome stated this project has a huge price tag of \$680 million. It will be cost shared with federal and local/state funds of 65%-35%. The non-federal share will be \$238 million. The first foot print of the levee with the structure in place by 2011. Terrebonne Parish has to maintain the project as part of its contribution to the cost-share. To fund that, Terrebonne Parish passed a 4 cent sales tax. This tax will generate \$3.5 million per year. If the growth spurt in Terrebonne Parish continues as it is now, within 10 years \$50 million will be generated.

Jerome stated that currently they are waiting for the final public comment period to expire in February. The public notice will then be published in March, and then initial design will be initiated in April. He then stated that construction would begin sometime in 2003.

Jerome stated that some environmental concerns from both outside and within the community have been expressed. They are concerned the state is trying to rebuild its coastline behind levees. The Environmental community is concerned that this is a typical Corp levee. Jerome stated that this is the most atypical levee ever built, in his opinion. The proposed levee is not a complete barrier to water exchange. It is designed to be closed only during the approach of a hurricane.

Jerome then showed a map depicting all existing local and future Coast 2050 projects in the parish. He stated that a lot of those projects share a common boundary, and that this new project will not impose any additional hydrologic boundary or barriers.

Beverly Etheridge asked what was the actual width of the GIWW. Jerome stated that it really depended on your location. Steve Smith stated that it is actually about 1,000 ft. wide west of Houma and in open marsh areas.

But between Minor's canal and the Cypress stand it is approximately 150 ft. wide.

Sue Hawes asked if there would be pumps in this system. Jerome state that there would not be pumps in this system.

21st Management Conference Minutes
January 24, 2002
Page 6

Don Lirette informed that there was input from the fisheries industry and that he was very happy to see that the parish took into consideration of this input.

Rod Emmer stated that a system similar to this one was implemented in Ascension Parish

David Muth stated that not only is the mission of BTNEP to preserve wetlands, but to preserve what remnants upland habitats remain. He asked if any thought was given in the design to avoid what remains in that area. Jerome stated that there is some development but not south of this proposed system. He stated that there is some impact on the wetlands from this project, but mitigation will take place.

Kerry suggested to Jerome that BTNEP set up a field trip for interested MC members showing them the propose project. Jerome stated he would be happy to accommodate a field trip.

D. Coast 2050 Update

John Saia, US Army Corp of Engineers, was present to give an update on Coast 2050 activities and processes. He first gave an overview of Coast 2050 and the problems being addressed. John stated that Coast 2050 is now taking a comprehensive look at the entire coast and is also moving forward with the Delta Management Study and the Atchafalaya Reef study that will be started later this year.

John then described three types of projects that are being implemented: 1) River Diversions; 2) Marsh Creation; and 3) Barrier Island restoration.

John stated that in order to get the projects implemented and completed, more agencies needed to get involved. He stated that the Dept. of Transportation and Energy needed to participate.

John also stated that Coast 2050 has a source of funding of \$40-50 million per year. However, it will take \$500-700 billion to make this effort a reality.

John then reminded the MC of the advisory commission developed by the governor, "Future of Coastal Louisiana" and how Coast 2050 is looking to that committee to help push Coast 2050 efforts forward.

Melanie Boulet suggested to the MC that Kerry St.Pe' serve on the governor's advisory commission. John stated that the MC will have representation in many ways, either on the commission is self or an a regional team.

John then went on to say that a comprehensive report will be submitted as a basis of the authorization. This report has to be completed by July 1, 2004 in order for it to be included in the WRDA authorization packet for a \$15billion project.

John informed the MC that he and Windell have been talking about putting together a speaker's group that will talk about the coastal problems. Suggested speakers are Windell, Kerry, Jerome Zeringue and others who are knowledgeable in the issues.

E. Summary of Governor's Committee on the Future of Coastal Louisiana

Rod Emmer reminded the MC that August 15, 2001 was an important date for the State of Louisiana because it was at the Coastal Summit that Governor Foster wanted to bring industry and other groups into the discussion with Federal and State agencies that are dealing with coastal restoration. The Governor then created the Committee on the Future of Coastal Louisiana. Governor Foster asked King Milling, President of Whitney Bank, to serve as the chair. Other members were chosen based on experience with management and organization, and with the understanding of how government works. However, they do not represent any special interest. The issues being examined by the commission are how to manage and handle the vast

21st Management Conference Minutes
January 24, 2002
Page 7

amounts of money that is expected in order to address coastal restoration efforts.

Rod informed the MC that the committee last met on January 7th, in Luling. At that meeting, conceptual recommendations were developed. A report will be developed and put up before public review before it is submitted to the Governor.

Loulan Pitre who has sat in on some of the committee meetings stated that some of the issues being discussed are: 1) there needs to be a governor's advisory committee to interface with the federal task force and the structure should have geographic restrictions; 2) should the governor appoint members of specifically defined constituencies or special interest groups; 3) is there a need for a department of the coast, that would have more power than DNR's coastal division and the Governor's Office of Coastal Activities, i.e. Louisiana CWPPRA.

F. BT Management Conference Attendance Policy

Kerry reminded the MC that a few years ago, the MC approved changes to the BTMC Operational Procedures. The changes stated that if MC members are absent from 2 consecutive meetings, that organization goes on probation. When an organization goes on probation, Kerry is to send a letter informing the organization of its probationary status. The next 2 consecutive meetings must be attended to be put back into good standing with the MC.

Kerry informed the MC that the agency or group may have as many alternates as they wish. Kerry stated he had to write a couple of letters informing the group of their probationary status. At the next meeting, the MC will be asked for recommendations for replacements for groups that have been present at the past several meetings.

V. ADJOURN

Donald Lirette moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:48pm and Jessie Kastler seconded the motion.