

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

**MC Meeting #23
9:30 AM July 31, 2002
Multipurpose Room
Ellender Memorial Library
Nicholls State University Campus
Thibodaux, LA**

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

9:30am A. Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 9:50am and roll was called. The following MC members were present:

Dr. Rex Caffey, for Dr. Paul Coriel, LSU Ag Center
Mr. Chuck Villarubia, for Mr. Jim Rives, LA Dept. of Natural Resources
Ms. Sue Hawes, US Army Corp of Engineers
Mr. Archie Chaisson, for Mr. Alvin Hebert, Bayou Lafourche Fresh Water District
Mr. Jess Curle, Lafourche Parish Coastal Zone Management
Dr. Jessie Kastler, LUMCON
Ms. Rebecca Triche, for Mr. Mark Davis-Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana
Ms. Gabrielle Bodin, for Mr. Dennis Demcheck-USGS
Mr. Wallace Ellender-American Sugar Cane League
Mr. Loulan Pitre-Greater Lafourche Port Commission
Ms. Martha Segura, for Mr. David Fruge- US Fish & Wildlife Service
Ms. Victoria Caridas-Plaquemines Parish Coastal Zone Management
Ms. Christy Rogers, for Mr. David Hughes-LA Dept. of Environmental Quality
Mr. Quin Kinler, for Mr. Donald Gohmert-USDA/NRCS
Ms. Christina Swaye, for Mr. Roland Guidry-Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinator's Office
Ms. Lori LeBlanc, for Mr. Vic Lafont-South Louisiana Economic Council
Mr. Randy Lanctot-Louisiana Wildlife Federation
Mr. Al Levron-Terrebonne Parish
Mr. Donald Lirette, for Mr. Mike Voisin-Commercial Fisheries
Ms. Ann Wilson, for Mr. Cecil Picard-LA Dept. of Education
Mr. Mike Lyons, LA Mid-Continent Oil & Gas Association
Dr. Earl Melancon, Nicholls State University
Ms. Anne Perry, LA Dept. of Economic Development
Ms. Pam Roussel, for Mr. Kevin Belanger-South Central Planning & Development Commission
Mr. Rick Hartman-US National Marine Fisheries Service
Mr. Troy Hill-US EPA Region VI
Mr. John Woodard, for Mr. Brad Spicer-LA Association of Conservation Districts
Mr. Vince Guillory, LA Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries
Ms. Vicki Duffourc, for Ms. Marnie Winters-Jefferson Parish
Mr. David Muth-National Park Service

Organizations not represented are:

LA Dept. of Health & Hospitals
Governor's Office of Coastal Activities
Louisiana Landowner's Association

Louisiana Independent Oil & Gas Association
23rd Management Conference Meeting Minutes
July 31,2002
Page 2

Assumption Parish
Louisiana Association of Levee Boards
Louisiana Farm Bureau
US Coast Guard
St. Charles Parish
LA Dept. of Agriculture & Forestry
Louisiana Science Teacher's Association
Coastal Conservation Association of LA

BTNEP Staff present were:

Kerry St. Pé
Deborah Schultz
Dean Blanchard
Sandra Helmuth
Eddie Landrum
Andrew Barron
Leslie McVeigh

Guests present were:

Katina Gaudet-The Daily Comet
Mark Schleifstein-The Times Picayune
Rod Emmer-
Robert Twilley-ULL
Vince Cottone-Mid-Continent Oil & Gas Assoc.
Linda Pace-LDNR
Jeff Smith-AmeriCorps on the Bayou
Beverly Etheridge-US EPA
Michael Knobloch
Doug Daigle-Mississippi River Basin Alliance
Celeste Dupre-USGS
John Bell-LSU Dept of Food Science
James Miller-Terrebonne Parish
Tim Connolly-LA Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries

I. B. Reading and Approval of Minutes of the April 18, 2002 meeting

Earl Melancon moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes from the April 18th meeting and to approve them as is. Sue Hawes seconded the motion. No one opposed the motion.

II. C. Program Activities (since April 18, 2002)

- ❖ **Personnel-** Andrew Barron-Nonpoint Source Pollution Program Coordinator; Wendi French-Website Contractor; Kristen Besse-Student Worker

Kerry announced also that he has been appointed as Interim Administrator of LUMCON until a permanent director is found.

- ❖ **Presentations/Exhibits-**Restore or Retreat Fund Raiser; American Water Resources Conference; American Chemical Society; CSO 2002 Conference; Leadership Terrebonne; Coastal Wetlands Workshop; LASIP Workshop; History Camp; Wetshop

- ❖ **Media Interviews**-KLRZ-Program Update and Migratory Bird Celebration Day; Dr. Delahaye of NSU-History of BTNEP on NSU Campus; KTIB "Dialogue Show"-Program Update
- ❖ **Meetings**-LUMCOM Director Search Committee; Region 3 Coast 2050 Scoping Meeting; Region 2 Coast 2050 Scoping Meeting; Pipeline Slurry Meeting; Legislative Meetings; New Orleans Seafood & Marketing Board; Coast 2050 Outreach Committee; Restore or Retreat Executive Committee; Groundwater Task Force; La Fete d'Ecologie Steering Committee; Basics of the Basin Conference; CWPPRA Outreach Committee; Invasive Species Task Force Meeting; Marsh Maneuvers; DOTD Meeting; Bayou Lafourche Siphon Over site Committee; State Wetlands Task Force; GMPO Focus Team Meeting; Gulf NEP Director's Meeting; Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District; Introduction to Identification of Wetland Forest Trees; Boater Safety Training; GMP State Meeting; Americorps Advisory Committee; Corps of Engineers Change of Command

I. D. Set Date for 24th Management Conference Meeting

BTNEP staff suggested a date of October 24, 2002. However, the LSTA conference is scheduled to begin that day, therefore, the date was changed to October 22nd.

II. ACTION ITEMS

II. A. Discussion of Resolution in Support of the Purchase of Elmer's Island for Public Use-

Kerry stated that LWF is trying to get Elmer's Island purchased. He reminded the MC that Elmer's Island is a privately owned barrier island and it is for sale. LWF is pushing for the State of Louisiana to purchase this property. Kerry stated that Richard and Randy have set up a field trip for national people to tour the island and discuss the possibility of a purchase. Randy stated that the BTNEP resolution is an elaboration of the resolution accepted by the LWF. Office of State Parks has a \$22 million park development plan for this area, Randy stated. However, this plan is a bit grandiose in Randy's opinion, LWF was looking to keep it as primitive as possible, that is keep it in its natural state but meeting public health codes. He stated that other ideas would be taken into consideration.

Randy moved to accept the resolution and Donald Lirette seconded.

Rick Hartman would like to see the last paragraph altered to say, "dedicated to fish and wildlife conservation and maintain its historic undeveloped character of the property". Rick motioned to accept the resolution with this change and Sue Hawes seconded that motion. There was no opposition to the amendment. The resolution was adopted.

David Muth asked if anyone knew the appraisal price. Rick Hartman stated that according to the newspaper, the appraisal price is \$3.5 million. The newspaper also said that the State couldn't go more than 20% over appraised price when purchasing a piece of property.

There was no further discussion of the resolution, and the resolution was passed.

III. DISCUSSION ITEMS

III. A. Global Climate Change Presentation-Dr. Robert Twilley

Robert Twilley, lead author of the report entitled *Confronting Climate Change in the Gulf Region*, described likely climate changes and potential consequences for ecosystems spanning the region from the southern tip of Texas to the Florida Keys. The encroaching sea threatens wetland ecosystems and coastal infrastructure, making global climate change one of the most significant challenges Louisiana will face in the coming decades.

Kerry stated to the MC that global climate change is a very important issue to this area because of the low-lying areas.

Dr. Twilley began by giving some background information about the report, in which he was lead author, "Confronting Climate Change in the Gulf Region". He stated this is a report for policy. He stated that this report is facilitated by a group of concerned scientists and ecological societies. Dr. Twilley became involved through the Ecological Society of America. The report was paid for by a series of foundations. He stated that is the second of a series of three reports.

He explained to the MC that this report explores the risks of climate change to Gulf Coast ecosystems in the context of pressures of land use. He stated also that the purpose of the report is to help the public and policymakers understand the most likely ecological consequences of climate change in the region over the next 50 to 100 years and prepare to safeguard the economy, culture, and natural heritage of the Gulf Coast.

Dr. Twilley showed a diagram indicating that climate change has always been a factor in coastal land loss and water distribution. However, the main issue is land use change. Climate change only amplifies how we use our natural resources. Population change is another major issue in climate change.

Dr. Twilley explained that there were 3 different models used to gather data for this report. Each model had differing data, but the data resulted in similar conclusions.

He stated that report suggests that adaptation is needed in the following areas in order to meet the challenges of climate change:

- 1) Water resource management
- 2) Agriculture and forestry
- 3) Land and biodiversity conservation
- 4) Coastal communities
- 5) And other climatic hazards.
- 6) We need to account for carbon resources.

Kerry asked if there is going to be a 44% increase in sea level over the next 100 years, why are we trying to save the coast, when the sea level will increase no matter what? Robert answered; that in the short-term perspective, we need to protect the infrastructure we already have for the next 50 years.

Lori LeBlanc asked how he is using any of this information for his ecological model he has been asked to do for the FCA Frameworks Committee.

23rd Management Conference Meeting Minutes
July 31, 2002
Page 5

Rex Caffey asked if there are any precedents set nationally for climate change planning. Dr. Twilley answered that there are several states that are responding to climate change issues. For example, North Carolina residents are not rebuilding houses wiped out by hurricanes because of insurance issues. Insurance companies are the primary funders of climate change research at this time because of risk factors for their industry.

Dr. Twilley informed the group that underwriters have put a \$170 billion value on infrastructure in South Louisiana. Therefore, insurance premiums will skyrocket over the next ten years.

Kerry mentioned that surface waters would be affected by climate change before aquifers will be.

He reminded the MC that during the drought of 2000, water intakes took place that violated health standards.

Kerry asked if changes in migration patterns of animals could be an indication of climate change. Robert said yes.

Doug Daigle stated that a resolution was passed to set up a state study session to assess the policy options for a climate change study. For more information, individuals can go to the legislative website and look up SCR-14. He suggested that BTNEP might want to pass a resolution to take this seriously.

III. B. LCA Framework Development Committee Update-Honora Buras, LDNR

Honora gave an update on what has been going on since the scoping meetings were held. She handed out the formulation process for the plan and its general schedule. This schedule named the phases of the plan and the dates these phases will take place and be completed.

She stated that currently the committee is moving into Phase III-Alternative Plan Formulation where the measures developed in Phase II must be refined and developed.

She stated that the remainder of the plan is getting the report written and reviewed.

Honora also discussed the administrative hierarchy and study team members. She informed the MC that a Public Participation Team is currently being formed. This will be the vehicle to be used for public input, not just for Public Outreach.

She stated the last series of public meetings would take place the last week in August, first week of September. She said the meeting for the BTNEP area would take place in Larose and Morgan City.

The last item she was tasked to do at this meeting was to discuss the creation of the Action Plan Team from the MC where the Framework Committee could get direct input from the Action Plan Team.

23rd Management Conference Meeting Minutes
July 31, 2002
Page 6

Kerry informed Honora that the members of this Action Plan Team have already been selected and a meeting will be called. He then asked how the Action Plan Team would be incorporated into the Frameworks Development Committee. She stated that a meeting needs to be held right away.

Lori LeBlanc stated that a meeting has been set for August 6th to discuss the public participation plan. She stated she would be attending that meeting for Restore or Retreat but she will also be representing BTNEP as a MC member.

Kerry listed the existing members of the Restoration Action Plan Team. They are: Lori LeBlanc, David Muth, Sue Hawes (as an advisor), Mark Davis, Jerome Zeringue, Loulan Pitre, Scott Wilson, Doug Jacobsen, Donald Lirette, Marnie Winters/Vicki Duffourc, Jess Curole, and Vicki Caridas.

A tentative date of September 26th was set for the first Action Plan Team. Donald Lirette suggested that Kay Radlauer be asked to be on this Action Plan Team.

Randy Lanctot suggested that the public be given a schedule of the meetings so they can be kept up to date with what is going on with this plan.

III. C. BT Estuary Foundation Project Updates-Cullen Curole

Cullen Curole, Executive Director of the Barataria Terrebonne Estuary Foundation, gave an update on the following projects:

1) Migratory Bird Celebration Day: Cullen stated that this celebration was a huge success with 400-500 birders. The 3-day event included tours and educational sessions to the high school students. He stated that in his opinion, the biggest success was that the people that attended were not just from Grand Isle, but also from out of state and mostly from just outside the BT Estuary, such as Baton Rouge and Lafayette area.

2) La Fete d'Ecologie: Cullen reminded the MC that the date for the festival is September 28th. He stated that this year again there would be bands and dancers, as well as exhibits. He informed the MC that Restore or Retreat will have an exhibit for the first time this year, along with several other new exhibits.

3) Back to the Bayou Paddle Trip: Cullen stated that this year's event would be 5 days. There will be facilities for campers this year so that the participants will not have to be shuttled to and from hotels. Also, C.C. Lockwood will join the group on the first night at Madewood Plantation. He will give a workshop on nature photography. Cullen stated that Ken Wells, author and reporter with the Wall Street Journal, will be joining the group on another evening, doing story telling.

III. D. Formal Education/Outreach Project Updates-Deborah Schultz

Deborah Schultz informed the MC that the recent Coastal Wetland Workshop was a success as usual. Rebecca Triche and Kay Radlauer facilitated the workshop. She stated that this year's workshop was focused on the concept of diversions as a whole, not just Davis Pond. Rebecca added that this was a focus group as well as peer-to-peer interaction. She stated that there were 2 parish presidents in attendance as well as 3 mayors and a legislator. Kay added that all

the parishes that are connected to the BTE were invited, and 11 actually participated.

23rd Management Conference Meeting Minutes

July 31, 2002

Page 7

Deborah then informed the MC that Marsh Maneuvers is taking place right now. She stated that she attended the first week of the camp. She stated that the group that attended was from non-estuary parishes. She was very impressed with these students.

Deborah then updated the MC on the Educator Workshops that the St. Charles Parish School Board is contracted to perform. Workshops are currently being developed along with curriculum guides that will integrate Math, Science and Social Studies. The workshops will be tested in the schools this fall, and then will actually take place in the spring of 2003. She stated that this same group is working on a Migratory Bird Curriculum also. This group will be presenting this curriculum guide at the North American Ornithological Conference in September, as well as at the LSTA Conference in October.

The last event Deborah reported on is Estuaries Live. It is a partnership between NOAA and the NEP. It will be a 2-day virtual tour of eight different estuaries around the country, including BTNEP. Deborah passed out a flyer and a tentative schedule for the program. She stated that BTNEP will have one hour of live internet broadcast for a virtual field trip to a site that has not been selected, although, Deborah stated that Elmer's Island is a possibility she would like to look into. Deborah then asked for volunteers to assist with this project. Jessie Kastler and Earl Melancon volunteered. David Muth offered the assistance of the National Park Service and its staff.

III. E. BTNEP Tidal Graph 2002-2003 Calendar

Kerry stated that all members of the MC should have received a copy of BTNEP's latest product, The BTNEP Tidal Graph 2002-2003 Calendar, in the mail. He stated that the first printing was for 4,000 and they were distributed very quickly. Kerry stated that the calendars that were ordered specifically for the MC would be ready to pick up tomorrow.

III. F. Oil Spill Prevention Booklet Update

Dean Blanchard informed the MC that this new product was developed to show that preventing oil spills costs a lot less and is a lot less environmentally damaging than cleaning a spill up. Dean gave a PowerPoint presentation highlighting sections of the booklet.

III. G. Sustainability Indicator Update

Dean stated that when this project started, there were 12 indicators that were going to be looked at. BTNEP held a workshop last summer where 33 indicators were identified. Information was gathered and compiled into graphs and text. This draft document was sent back out to those that provided the data for approval. Now the Action Plan Team is looking at this information and deciding on which indicator to use to show the health of the estuary.

III. H. FY2003 Budget Update

Leslie McVeigh reminded the MC that at the last MC meeting, BTNEP was in search of additional state match. Leslie informed the MC that the additional funds would be coming from the State Wetlands Authority through the engineering and design phase of the Bayou Lafourche Freshwater Reintroduction Project. Those monies have to be used on specific outreach activities related to the Bayou Lafourche Project. Function of the Program Office and Foundation will be coordinated and defined in order to complement one another.

III. I. Davis Pond Workshop

Leslie McVeigh stated that the date for this workshop would be postponed until some significant impact of the opening of the gates is present. As of right now, that will be about six months from
23rd Management Conference Meeting Minutes
July 31,2002
Page 8

the day the gates were open. Leslie then asked for volunteers to be on the Action Plan Team to plan this workshop. The following people volunteered: Vicki Duffourc, Vicki Caridas, Chuck Villarubia, Bill Good and Earl Melancon.

Kerry suggested that a date be selected before the end of the year.

Leslie stated that she will select a date, time and place for the planning committee meeting and will email a notice to the MC and committee members of the last workshop.

Kay offered to send Leslie a list of the planning committee members for the Wetland Workshops that dealt with Davis Pond.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

Rebecca Triche reported that the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana has up to \$100,000 to match for a habitat restoration project.

She also informed the MC that the CWPPRA is hosting Media Training on August 24, at LUMCON in Cocodrie, LA.

She then told the MC that the Public Participation Meeting mentioned earlier is going to be held from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the LDNR, Room 1026.

Kay Radlauer stated that she had copies of the first Grand Isle Sanctuary Group poster. It is signed by the artist and the artwork was donated to help create the bird watching sanctuary on Grand Isle. A donation of at least \$5 to the group would be greatly appreciated in return for the poster.

Mark Schleifstein with the Times Picayune informed the MC that next fall, the annual conference for the Society for Environmental Journalists would be held in New Orleans. They will be setting up bus tours all over the state to look at environmental issues. Coastal restoration will be a key theme of the conference.

He also informed the MC that the Times Picayune just finished a series on hurricane protection for New Orleans and the Louisiana coastline. He stated that copies of that series would be available in the near future. He stated that anyone could email him at mersmia@aol.com for a copy of that series.

V. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 1:52pm