

Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program

*MC Meeting # 30 Minutes
9:00AM-May 13, 2004
Nicholls State University Campus
Plantation Room-NSU Student Union
Thibodaux, LA*

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Roll-Call

The following Management Conference Members were present:

Mr. Herman Waguespack-American Sugarcane League
Mr. Archie Chaisson-Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District
Mr. Donald Lirette-Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana and Commercial Fisheries
Mr. John Walthers-Coastal Conservation Association of LA
Ms. Vickie Duffourc-Jefferson Parish
Mr. Butch Stegall-LA Dept. of Ag & Forestry
Ms. Anne Perry-LA Dept. of Economic Development
Ms. Jean May-Brett-LA Dept. of Education
Ms. Syeda Qadri-LA Dept. of Environmental Quality
Mr. Anthony Roussel-LA Dept. of Health & Hospitals
Mr. Jim Rives-LA Dept. of Natural Resources
Mr. Vince Guillory-LA Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries
Mr. Jess Curole-Lafourche Parish CZM
Ms. Christina Swaye-LA Oil Spill Coordinator's Office
Mr. Paul Johnson-Louisiana Science Teacher's Association
Ms. Jessica Kastler-LUMCON
Mr. David Bourgeois-LSU Ag Center
Mr. David Muth-National Park Service
Dr. Earl Melancopn-Nicholls State University
Mr. Andrew McInnes-Plaquemines Parish
Ms. Julie Boudreaux-South Central Planning & Development Commission
Mr. Al Levron-Terrebonne Parish
Ms. Jean Landry-The Nature Conservancy
Mr. Doug Jacobson- US EPA
Ms. Lisa Zeringue-USDA/NRCS

MC Organizations not represented:

Assumption Parish
Governor's Office of Coastal Activities
Greater Lafourche Port Commission
Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association
LA Dept. of Culture, Recreation & Tourism
LA Assoc. of Conservation Districts
LA Assoc. of Levee Boards
LA Farm Bureau
LA Forestry Association
LA Independent Oil & Gas Association
LA Landowner's Association
LA Mid-Continent Oil & Gas Association
LA Wildlife Federation
South Louisiana Economic Council

St. Charles Parish

US Army Corp of Engineers
US Coast Guard
US Fish & Wildlife
US Geological Survey
US National Marine Fisheries

BTNEP Staff Present:

Kerry St. Pe'
Sandra Helmuth
Deborah Schultz
Dean Blanchard
Andrew Barron
Leslie McVeigh

Guests:

Katina Gaudet-The Daily Comet
Fred Kopfler-Gulf of Mexico Program
Wendi French-Wyndston Services
Joni Blanchard-private citizen
Bob Roberts-LA Dept of Natural Resources
Wayne Keller-Port Commission
Neil Pollock-Propoganda, Inc.
Nolan Bergeron-Terrebonne Parish
Chuck Villarubia-LDNR

B. Reading and Approval of Minutes of the February 19, 2004 meeting

Jim Rives made a motion to dispense the reading of the minutes and to approve as is. Heather Finley seconded. There were no objections.

II. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

A. Personnel

Aimey Tregre-New Student Worker

B. Presentations/Exhibits

Environmental Educator's Symposium (Baton Rouge); S. Thibodaux Elementary School; NSU Jubilee; Town of Plaquemine; Planning of Wetlands Workshop (Golden Meadow); Business Woman's Association (Thibodaux); Grand Isle Migratory Bird Celebration Day(Grand Isle); Bayou Region at the Legislature(Baton Rouge)

C. Media Interviews

Ghost Crab Trap Media Day; Coastal Roots (Jason Project); KLRZ & KTIB-Crab Trap Program, Migratory Bird Celebration Day; Mississippi River Re-Introduction to Bayou Lafourche Meetings

D. Meetings

LCA Outreach Committee; Governor's Advisory Committee; LWF Conference; Mekong River Commission; ANEP/EPA Spring Meeting (Washington, DC); Oral History (Tucson, AZ); LSU

Cooperative Extension Service Evaluation Focus Team Meeting; LSU Ag Center Master Farmer; BT Estuary Foundation Board; America's Wetlands Education Summit, National Environmental Policy Assoc. (NEPA) Meetings on the Mississippi River Re-Introduction to Bayou Lafourche Project; LCA Public Meetings; CWPPRA Outreach Committee, Migratory Bird APT, Larose Nature Trail Acquisition; Wetland's Training Institute Plant Identification Workshop

E. Projects Initiated:

1. A Vegetative Model for Restoration, Conservation, and Habitat Enhancement on Beneficial-Use Dredge Sediments- Richard DeMay
2. 2005 Calendar Depicting Oil & Produced Water Spill Prevention Measures Applicable to the Oil & Gas Industry within the BTNEP-Dean Blanchard
3. Creative Development of Recipe Cards, Re-design and Layout of "Portrait of an Estuary" and Estuary Brochure, and other Products to be used in Conjunction with BTNEP Outreach and Educational Efforts-Leslie McVeigh
4. Program Development of Leadership Council Training Program and Continued Implementation of Specified Activities Related to Mississippi River Re-Introduction into Bayou Lafourche-Leslie McVeigh
5. Cooperative Incentives Resources Guide-Leslie McVeigh
6. Phase I Curriculum Development for Swamp Tour Operators Certification Program-Leslie McVeigh
7. Phase II of the Accelerated Program of Woody Plant Species Selection for Conservation, Restoration and Neotropical Habitat Enhancement-Dean Blanchard
8. Closed Captioning of the BTNEP Educational Videos-Sandra Helmuth

III. Schedule Next Meeting Date: August 19, 2004 was approved for the next meeting date.

IV. ACTION ITEMS

A. FY2005 Workplan-BTNEP Staff (1 hour, 30 minutes)

This draft workplan for fiscal year 2005 (October 1, 2004 - September 30, 2005), will be submitted to EPA in June. The workplan describes a budget request to EPA for executing approximately 25 projects/CCMP action plans as listed below:

Indirect Charges (to LUMCON)	\$	33,167.64
Travel Funds		10,000.00
Continuation of the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program Website www.btnep.org		20,000.00
Tidal Graph Calendar, 2005		6,200.00
Outreach Coordinator Position		37,500.00
Administrative Funds		14,094.00
9 th Annual "La Fete d'Ecologie: Barataria-Terrebonne		40,000.00
Swamp Tour Operator's Certification Program		10,000.00
Support for Wetlands/Cultural Day at NSU Jubilee		5,000.00
Production of BTNEP DVD/Video Updates		40,000.00
Stakeholder's Report		10,000.00
Accelerated Program of Woody Plant Species Selection for Conservation, Restoration & Neotropical Habitat Enhancement		32,850.00
Derelict Crab Trap Removal Program		5,000.00
Fisheries Identification Guide		7,000.00

Bayou Bank Riparian Area Stabilization	50,000.00
Students and Teacher as Educational Partners in Science (S.T.E.P.S.)	15,000.00
Summer Camps	8,000.00
Paddle Bayou Lafourche	10,000.00
Jason Project Support	20,000.00
Delta Service Corps Position	10,000.00
Grand Isle Birding Trail Improvements	30,000.00
Birding/Nature Trail on Pointe Aux Chenes WMA	30,000.00
Grand Isle Bird Day Celebration	7,500.00
Layout of the Chenier Brochure	5,000.00
Development of Kiosk Poster Content	13,950.00
A Travel Cost Analysis of a Bird-Watching Festival, The Grand Isle Migratory Bird Celebration Day	9,976.00
Wings Over the Wetlands Bird Festival	5,000.00
Development of a Bird Calendar	5,000.00
Printing	16,753.36
TOTAL	\$506,991.00

Donald Lirette moved to accept the workplan as discussed and Archie Chaisson seconded. There were no objections and the work plan was approved.

Kerry then introduced Nolan Bergeron from Terrebonne Parish Coastal Zone Management and Restoration Committee. Mr. Bergeron passed around a petition to help us restore this area. This petition will go to Congress and the President of the US.

V.DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. LCA Update-Kerry St. Pe' (45 minutes)

Kerry reminded the MC that recently a series of LCA Scoping Meetings were held. Kerry stated that initially Louisiana was seeking \$14 billion to restore the coast. In recent discussions in Washington, DC, Louisiana was encouraged to prioritize the projects using a smaller amount of money in 10 years. The Scoping meetings were held to get the public to assist in the prioritization of the projects.

The BTNEP staff feels it is imperative that the MC approves comments on the LCA to represent the views of the Program on this latest restoration plan. These comments will explain what the MC has defined as holistic restoration in the CCMP.

Kerry then went over the comments that were developed by him and other BTNEP staff members. In the cover letter, he explains the core components of the BTNEP. He mentions that the CCMP was a historic agreement for Louisiana because it represented the consensus of all agencies and stakeholders that participated in the 5-year planning process.

Section I of the comments deals with the two scoping questions that the Corp wants input on. The first question is what are the critical and natural human ecological needs that should be addressed in the programmatic EIS. The second question is what are the significant resources that should be considered in this EIS.

Kerry stated that in this section he is providing BTNEP's definition of complete system restoration. He provided in the comments the conceptual model of the BTNEP approach to restoration that was developed early on in the planning stages of the CCMP. He points out that the model is multi-faceted and goes well beyond just the creation of land, that it incorporates watershed level planning, community support and it needs to look at all habitats in the system and must be scientifically based.

Heather Finley suggested adding a statement that says that restoration should include monitoring of projects and taking those results and using them in the future to make needed changes.

Kerry asked Heather to write that up and email it to him and he would include it in the comments.

Section II addresses the subprovinces of Coast 2050. Kerry stated that BTNEP addressed only those subprovinces that cover the BTE. He stated that BTNEP looked at each project and compared it with the CCMP and made a draft determination on whether or not these projects are consistent with the CCMP. He stated that the CCMP was strongly supported and was developed by 100's of people over 1000's of hours over a 5 year period and it deserves to be considered by all of agencies that participated in its development.

Kerry stated that the BTNEP listed the seven ecological management action plans from the CCMP. The BTNEP staff evaluated each of the projects and in the comments stated whether or not that project addressed any of the seven action plans.

Section III of the comments addresses the sorting criteria definition that follows a tiered approach. To address this, Kerry highlighted the last paragraph to his cover letter that points out that although the BTNEP can not claim a unanimous agreement on every single section in the CCMP, BTNEP does claim that what is in the CCMP represents a consensus of what the agencies and other stakeholders view as essential components of watershed restoration.

Kerry stated that in this section he provides comments as to whether or not the sorting criteria presented in the LCA are relevant. He stated that although the BTNEP has been advocating pipeline slurry for over 2 years, it has only recently received attention. He then went on to explain the pipeline sediment slurry technique to the MC. Kerry explained that at the LCA public meeting in Belle Chasse, this idea was set aside as a possible demonstration project because it was determined that there was not enough scientific and engineering knowledge. Kerry stated that he wants to change the Corp's mind about that.

Kerry stated that another concern to BTNEP was that in the efforts to put priority on where to focus attention in this latest restoration plan, it was decided that only the areas that were projected to be lost between 2000 and 2050 would be addressed. The concern is that BTES would not be addressed because most of this area is already gone.

Kerry stated that in the comments that BTNEP is in full agreement that there needs to be priorities and that the criteria are excellent, however, they are only being applied to areas that are predicted to be lost. BTNEP states in its comments that this is a good strategy but it should not be the only strategy. The comments go on to say that the BTES is in dire need of sediments from out of basin sources. BTNEP believe there are viable restoration tools that are especially suited for restoring shallow open water back to wetlands. Kerry goes on to read the comments saying that BTNEP is a staunch advocate for using an infrastructure of newly constructed pipelines to deliver river bedload sediments in slurry form into the system. BTNEP also disagrees with the LCA that there is not sufficient scientific evidence to support the use of this tool. Kerry lists sites in the comments that have proven this technique works.

Anne Perry suggested that it would be beneficial to mention that pipeline slurry from the Atchafalaya to

Morgan City is constantly being requested of the Corp.

David Muth states that possibly why the Corp is stating that there is not scientific data showing that pipeline slurry is successful is because there has been no long-term ecological monitoring to suggest that a viable long-term wetland has been built. He stated he feels this can be done if what you discharge at the end is uncontrolled.

Kerry stated that a main component in everything that needs to be addressed in a major restoration effort is the human component. The criterion of public acceptability is what makes pipeline slurry, in BTNEP's opinion, the single most viable restoration tool for our system. The public is not going to accept the use of huge volumes of water to get sediments moved to where they are needed. But the public will accept piping sediments with minimal salinity change into areas where they are needed.

Gary LaFleur asked that each MC member sign the comments and Kerry stated that ideally he would like that to happen. However, he knows that there is not enough time to go to each agency head to ask permission for its representative to sign the document. Yet, he feels it may not be necessary that everyone sign it. Kerry stated that everyone is invited to send their own note of support for these comments. David Muth asked if BTNEP was looking for a resolution. Kerry stated a resolution would be good from the MC allowing the MC Chairman and the BTNEP Program Director to send in these comments on behalf of the MC.

David Muth stated he firmly believes that these comments reflect what is in the CCMP and moved to approve the comments and Archie Chaisson seconded. No one was opposed; therefore there was a unanimous motion to approve the comments.

Kerry asked that those that made suggestions to please email them to him by the close of business Friday. Also those who would send a letter of support to get them in by the same day and time to Mr. William Kline at the Corp.

B. Discussion of Display and Modernization of BTNEP Logo-Leslie McVeigh

Leslie reminded the MC that the BTNEP office was flooded by Tropical Storm Allison in 2001. She stated that there was considerable damage to a lot of BTNEP equipment, including the first BTNEP display. She also stated that part of the insurance money BTNEP received is currently being used to replace that display.

She stated that Neil Pollock, with Propoganda, Inc. has been contracted to do the creative design of the display and also attempt to modernize the BTNEP logo. She presented to the MC a draft model of the proposed display. Neil then proceeded to give a description of what he is planning to do for the display.

C. Cypress Logging Advisory Commission-Andrew Barron

Andrew stated this board is now called the Coastal Forestry Policy. He stated that this task force has been assigned to come up with some best management practices for how to manage these coastal forests. This task force is going to be made up of academics and scientists who will look at data gaps, collect data if necessary and then all the data will be reviewed and then a document containing the task force's comments will be developed and sent to the Governor's Office so that a policy can be developed.

He stated that Cynthia Duet, with the Governor's Office asked that a representative from the BTNEP sit on the advisory panel. Andrew stated that he and Dean Blanchard will be attending those meetings.

D. Mississippi River Re-Introduction to Bayou Lafourche Project Public Meetings-Leslie McVeigh (10 minutes)

Leslie reminded the MC that all agencies are required by EPA to conduct public hearings in accordance

with the National Environmental Policy Act for any new projects that will have an environmental impact. EPA just finished a round of NEPA meetings with a total of 5 meetings. The meetings took place in Gray, Donaldsonville, Thibodaux, Napoleonville and Larose. Each meeting was very well attended and successful.

Bob Roberts, the DNR project manager, gave a brief report on public comments and what can be expected on the continuation of this project. Bob stated that the purpose of the meetings was to let the people know about the project status, project features and project costs.

Bob then thanked BTNEP, as well as the Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District, for their help and advice.

E. Derelict Crab Trap Program-Vince Guillory (5 minutes)

Vince gave a brief update on the results of this program. Vince refreshed everyone's memory by stating that LDWF held this event on February 28th thru March 14th in a 182,000 acre section of the upper Terrebonne Bay estuary. He stated that all crab traps had to be removed in this closure area by fisherman and any remaining traps were considered abandoned and would be picked up and brought back to the designated disposal sites.

He stated that there were a total of 215 volunteers and 90 boats picking up traps. A total of 6,676 traps were collected.

He stated because of this success, there will definitely be another program held next year within the BTES, probably south of Cocodrie or south of Dulac. He stated that because of the size of the BTES, it would take 3 to 4 years to complete the whole area.

F. Grand Isle Migratory Bird Celebration Day Update-Jean Landry, The Nature Conservancy

Jean stated that this is the 3rd year for the celebration to be a 3-day event. There was a craft show that very successful. She also stated that there were 7 property owners that opened their homes and/or their business for the birders to birdwatch. She informed the MC that there were 10 birding tours and several workshops for birders. All participants in all activities registered, therefore, there were 606 people registered. She realized there were duplicates and once they were extrapolated out, there were about 400 people registered.

G. Planning of Wetlands/S.T.E.P.S. Workshop Updates-Deborah Schultz (10 minutes)

Deborah informed the MC that there have been several workshops since the last MC meeting. One was the Planning of Wetlands, that was contracted through an organization called the Environmental Concern out of Maryland. It took place at the USDA Plant Materials Center where the participants learned out how to do surveying, how to figure a water budget for a particular area, how to select plants, etc. for creating an outdoor classroom. The participants consisted of teachers and non-formal educators.

Deborah then allowed Jessie Kastler to give the MC an update on the S.T.E.P.S. Workshop that took place at LUMCON. She stated that since she was entrusted with this program, she has held it 3 times. They have focused on water quality because that is a way of partnering with BTNEP in a positive way with the Bayouside Classroom.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Dr. Fred Kopfler informed the MC of the next GOMP State Project Meeting that will be held on August 3, 2004 at the Pensacola Room of the Galvez Conference Center of the LDEQ Headquarters. He also stated that proposals need to be in by June 18th. On the GMPO website there is a write up on what types of projects the GMPO is interested in.

Kerry stated to the MC that there are Dockwatch brochures for the Australian spotted jellyfish in front of them. BTNEP will be getting a kiosk that was developed to talk about invasives and hopes to bring that around to different locations.

Kerry stated that several people have been interviewed for the invasive species coordinator position. There are still a few more to be interviewed and someone should be hired by the next MC meeting.

VII. ADJOURN

At 1:30pm Jean May-Brett moved to adjourn the meeting and Archie Chaisson seconded the motion.