

Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program

*MC Meeting # 32 Minutes  
9:00AM-December 2, 2004  
Nicholls State University Campus  
Guidry Stadium-Century Room  
Thibodaux, LA*

**I. CALL TO ORDER-meeting was called to order at 9:12am**

**A. Roll-Call**

**The following Management Conference members were present:**

Archie Chaisson-Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District  
Steven Peyronnin-Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana  
Cynthia Duet-Governor's Office of Coastal Activities  
Bryce Autin-Greater Lafourche Port Commission  
Kathleen Deubler-Jefferson Parish Environmental Dept.  
Butch Stegall-LA Dept. of Agriculture and Forestry  
Ann Wilson-LA Dept. of Education  
Syeda Qadri-LA Dept. of Environmental Quality  
Anthony Roussell-LA Dept. of Health & Hospitals  
Jim Rives-LA Dept. of Natural Resources  
Jess Curole-Lafourche Parish  
John Woodard-LA Assoc. of Conservation Districts  
Paul Johnson-Louisiana Science Teachers Association  
Jessica Kastler-LUMCON  
David Bourgeois-LSU Agricultural Center  
David Muth-National Park Service  
Gary LaFleur-Nicholls State University  
Andrew McInnes-Plaquemines Parish  
Martha Cauzabon-South Central Planning & Development Commission  
Al Levron-Terrebonne Parish  
Cindy Brown-The Nature Conservancy  
Sue Hawes-US Army Corp of Engineers  
Rick Pachorka-US Coast Guard  
Dennis Demcheck-USGS  
Rick Hartman-US National Marine Fisheries Service

**Organizations not represented:**

American Sugar Cane League  
Assumption Parish  
Coastal Conservation Association  
Commercial Fisheries  
Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association  
LA Dept. of Culture, Recreation & Tourism  
LA Dept. of Economic Development  
LA Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries  
LA Association of Levee Boards  
Louisiana Farm Bureau  
Louisiana Forestry Association  
Louisiana Independent Oil & Gas Association  
Louisiana Landowner's Association

Louisiana Mid-Continent Oil & Gas Association

Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinator's Office  
Louisiana Wildlife Federation  
South Louisiana Economic Council  
St. Charles Parish  
US EPA  
US Fish & Wildlife Service  
USDA

**Guests present:**

Rod Emmer- R. E. Emmer & Assoc.  
Susan Bergeron-USGS  
James Miller-Terrebonne Parish  
Joni Blanchard  
Jennifer Lassiegne-NSU Intern to BTNEP  
Len Bahr-Governor's Office of Coastal Activities  
Steve Mathies-CH2M Hill  
Chris Arts-CH2M Hill  
Jean Landry-Louisiana Nature Conservancy  
Ed Landgraf-Shell Oil  
Brad Miller-LA Dept. of Natural Resources

**Staff Members Present:**

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

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

Jim Rives motioned to approve the minutes and that motion was seconded.

**II. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**A. Presentations/Exhibits**

Jason Project/Texas Instruments Teacher Workshops (NSU, Terrebonne Parish, Pointe Coupee Parish, St. Charles Parish, Jefferson Parish; Houma/Terrebonne Catholic School Teachers) Shrimp & Petroleum Festival; 8<sup>th</sup> Annual La Fete d'Ecologie; Jason Conference (Mexico); NSU Environmental Law & Policy Workshop; NSU Education Dept.; Wings Over the Wetlands Festival (Lafitte); NSU SGA Wetlands Summit; Wetlands 2004: Wetlands and Migratory Birds National Symposium (Kansas City, MO), NSU A+ Scholar Event; LSTA Conference (Lafayette); Pierre Part Ducks Unlimited Banquet; 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Paddle Bayou Lafourche; Louisiana Council for Social Studies (Lafayette); Jason Fall Conference (New Orleans); COSEE/SAME Restoration Panel; Field Trip for CNN news crew

**B. Media Interviews**

KTIB (La Fete); KLRZ (La Fete); WWL TV (coastal restoration); CNN (coastal landloss)

**C. Meetings**

CWPPRA Outreach Committee; N. Lafourche Levee District; CENAC/Mississippi River Commission Tour; Alabama-Mississippi Rapid Assessment Team (Mobile, AL), Data Quality Objectives and Quality

Assessment Training; NIGP Conference; Large Scale Restoration Using Pipeline Slurry Meeting; Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District Meeting; Coastal Advisory Committee; America's Wetland Press Conference; Green Space Project (Thibodaux); Legislative Outreach Committee; American Fisheries Society Steering Committee; World Preservation Water Monitoring Day; Nature Hike at Wildlife Refuge (Folsom); ANEP/NEP Fall Conference (Corpus Christi, TX); NSU Legislative Summit; Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service Parish Review; Restore or Retreat Fundraiser; ERCLA Conference (New Orleans); Gulf of Mexico Program Focus Team Meeting; Derelict Crap Trap Meeting; Wetland Institute Plant Identification Course (Houston, TX)

**D. Projects Initiated:**

1. Production of 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Paddle Bayou Lafourche Trip-Deborah Schultz
2. Jason Expedition: Disappearing Wetlands-Deborah Schultz
3. Support for 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Grand Isle Migratory Bird Celebration Event-Richard Demay
4. Improvements to the Birding/Nature Trails on Grand Isle, Jefferson Parish, Louisiana-Richard DeMay

Kerry stated that in the future amendments to existing projects will be listed as well, as those amendments may be new tasks that may be of interest to the MC. He informed the MC that the design of sleeve for the "Estuary Live" video is a new task to an existing contract with Celeste Regal. Kerry stated that we hope to have that video available for the next meeting and will be distributed in the same manner as all the other BTNEP informational materials.

He also stated that BTNEP is in collaboration with other groups to develop a new land loss series map. He stated the National Wetlands Research Center is the lead on that project. This map will show all of the historic land loss and projected land loss.

Another project in progress is an update of the Habitat Change map.

**III. Schedule Next Meeting Date: March 3, 2005**

**IV. Discussion Items**

**A. Bayou Lafourche Project Design Review Update-** Dr. Steve Mathies, CH2M Hill

Steve began his presentation by giving a history of the bayou. He stated that the purpose of the project was to maximize the Mississippi River flows through Bayou Lafourche into the receiving areas. The project looked at alternatives that would take water from Davis Pond and reroute it or take water from the Atchafalaya River through Cancienne Canal and reroute water that already came into the system. The project purpose was modified to make it clear that this project is about introducing more freshwater to the overall eco-system, not taking water that already comes in and replumbing it.

He then gave a refresher as to what the project entails. He reminded the MC that this was created through the Breaux Act and the primary focus was to restore wetlands in Barataria and Terrebonne Bay areas.

Steve stated that CH2M Hill was contracted to do the feasibility study looking at alternatives to benefit the wetlands in Barataria-Terrebonne and to provide an adequate water supply now and into the future for Bayou Lafourche. Because this project would produce high water levels in the City of Donaldsonville, CH2M Hill looked at getting the water down Bayou Lafourche without going through

Donaldsonville, instead construct a possible by-pass channel. There is a detailed modeling effort going on to predict where the water will go once it enters Bayou Lafourche.

CH2M Hill is charged to narrow the alternatives down from 5-8 to 3-5 to submit in their final evaluation. Steve stated the EPA has hired a contractor to look at the alternatives as well as what can be done with the spoil materials that will be dredged up.

Steve then went into more detail about the alternative to dig a by-pass channel to alleviate concerns of the citizens of Donaldsonville.

He stated that the 30% Design Report is due out in the fall. This report will recommend one alternative of the 3-5 remaining in review. DNR has the 10% Design Report currently, resolving their final comments.

Jim Rives asked where the alternative channel was located. Steve stated that it is about a mile from Donaldsonville.

Len Bahr asked if CH2M Hill has the flexibility to add features such as taking more water out of the upper Barataria Basin. Steve replied that such things as the pump station being expandable, the channel being enlarged, and adding additional pumps, are being considered in the design.

Gary Lafleur asked if assurances could be added that the bayou could not be damned further down river. Steve stated that if the Third Delta Project were to move to the detailed design phase, that would be addressed in that report, not this one.

Rick Hartman asked if the stream of funding for this project would be changing soon. Steve stated that this is a Breaux Act project. Under the current federal funding with the US Army Corp of Engineers, through the Water Resources Development Act, the funding of the Bayou Lafourche Project may shift from a Breaux Act project to Corps of Engineers Project. Rick stated that he was told at a meeting in Vicksburg that potentially as early as the next technical meeting, which is a week and a half away, they may move 2 projects, this one included, to LCA.

Sue Hawes said she heard that this project probably will not be moved until the 30% Design Review is completed.

David Muth asked why is a pump station necessary. Steve stated so that there is year round flow of the bayou.

Jessica Kastler asked how is this project going to increase or enhance the wetlands surrounding Bayou Lafourche. Steve explained that an existing connection at GIWW and Company Canal will be used. He stated that the increase of flow on Bayou Lafourche will increase the freshwater that will go out at that connection.

Kerry asked if any other possible connections off of Bayou Lafourche were studied and Steve stated no they were not.

**B. Coastal Forestry Advisory Committee Update-Cynthia Duet , Governor's Office of Coastal Activities**

Cynthia Duet reminded the MC that in late 2002-2003 discussions began between the Governor's Office and LSU to begin to form a group that would evaluate the regeneration potential of coastal

forests, specifically cypress tupelo swamps, in light of the controversy over logging in the Maurepas Swamp.

She introduced Dr. Jim Chambers, who is heading up the Science Working Group for the Coastal Forestry Initiative. The group's goal is to provide information on regeneration, establishment, protection and harvesting practices for cypress tupelo forest. The group will produce a report with recommendations to the Governor by April. The draft report is available at [www.coastalforestswg.lsu.edu](http://www.coastalforestswg.lsu.edu)

**C. Coastal Wetland Forest Conservation and Use**-Jim Chambers-LSU School of Forestry  
Dr. Jim Chambers informed the MC that the Science Group has been meeting since April 2004 and hopes to have the final report out in April of 2005. He stated that the mission of the group is to provide information and guidelines for the longterm utilization, conservation and protection of the coastal forest in Louisiana.

There are 5 major objectives for the Science Working Group:

- 1) to gather and synthesize the scientific information that was available
- 2) to summarize field information from previously harvested cypress
- 3) to review existing laws and regulations that impact forestry operations
- 4) to develop the science based guidelines that relate to the utilization, conservation and protection of the coastal forests
- 5) to identify areas of priority research

Dr. Chambers stated that a field site survey was done to look at bald cypress and tupelo dominated areas that were harvested from 10-50 yrs ago. The study looked at the type of regeneration that occurred and whether or not it was successful. Bald cypress was the predominant species in the survey.

Stump sprouting, the survey showed, was not found to be a reliable means of regeneration. The percent of stumps that did sprout was very low, less than 10%. The majority of stumps that were sprouting showed a lot of rotting, therefore they would not survive in the long-term as viable trees.

The survey showed also that bald cypress cannot regenerate on permanently flooded sites, therefore, the permanently flooded sites will move toward marsh or open water.

Dr. Chambers stated that on the basis of what has been done so far and the literature reviewed, the Science Working Group decided to establish condition classes that would allow people to use these in determining whether an area could be successfully regenerated or not.

He stated that the final steps are to complete the age and growth analysis, produce the preliminary report, present the findings of the Science Working Group, and to present the groups recommendations to the Governor's Office. He stated there will be a public review period of 6 weeks to 2 months to allow everyone to look at the report and think about the ramifications of the recommendations and provide the group with input. A final report will be compiled and completed by the end of April 2005.

Kerry asked if the data collected, in the permanently flooded class of forests, demonstrates that these sites will not regenerate, will there be a moratorium on logging by the Governor's Office. Dr. Chambers said that this would be left to the Governor's Office to decide after reviewing the report.

**D. Paddle Bayou Lafourche** – Deborah Schulz – BTNEP

Deborah informed the MC that there were 187 registrants this year. She stated that this year there was

online registration and payment by credit card. The canoe delivery was contracted out to Canoe and Trails out of New Orleans. Lunch was provided by communities along the Bayou and local talent was provided entertainment at the evening events.

**E. Jason Project Update** – Deborah Schulz – BTNEP

Deborah began with an overview of what Jason is all about and mentioned the Shell endowment for Jason training for teachers. There is a Jason workshop going on concurrently for Catholic schoolteachers over at E.D. White High School. Deborah also stated that Earl Melancon and other scientists in the BTE area have been involved in the development of the Jason materials being handed out across the country. Deborah will do a video-conference presentation to schools in Ohio and possibly

Michigan as well in the near future as a component of Jason teacher training in those areas. Deborah also discussed different ways in which Jason classrooms across the country are getting involved in coastal restoration. Kerry added his experiences with teachers calling in and asking what their classrooms can do, he always tells them to help lobby legislative support from their Congressional delegations.

**F. La Fete d'Ecologie Update** – Leslie Robichaux Suazo

Leslie thanked the NPS and Oil Spill Coordinator's office, NSU, and other major partners for their support. She stated that there will be an updated evaluation form that will be sent out via email to planning committee. She also stated that a photo gallery to be posted on website within 5-10 days.

**G. Cooperative Incentives Guide Draft** – Leslie Robochaux Suazo

Leslie stated that she sent out a draft via email and that has a second draft available via hard copy at this meeting. She will be taking for comments until Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>. Leslie then explained whom the guide was intended for, and its intended purpose. She also offered to email the updated draft to those who are interested.

**H. New BTNEP Display** – Leslie Suazo

Leslie had set up the Display, table, plasma and DVD player at the meeting. She mentioned that CWPRRA is also currently working on a new kiosk DVD including some BTNEP videos, etc. She thanked members who had comments on the copy in the display, Jack Fredine and Brad Miller specifically.

**I. Oil Spill Calendar Update** – Dean Blanchard – BTNEP

Dean had a draft of the calendar to pass around.

**V. New Business**

Kerry introduced Jennifer Lassiegne as a NSU intern working for BTNEP. Joni Blanchard stated that she and Jennifer have worked as a team working on the festival. She also is working with Richard DeMay putting together a migratory bird catalog of different advocacy groups on both coasts so BTNEP can target some mailings to them in the future.

Jennifer stated that interns are required to do a research project. She had a poster that was a part of her project to share with the group.

David Bourgerois, of LSU AgCenter, reminded the MC that at a meeting last spring, Dwayne Keller of the G.I. Port commission, gave plea for vegetation for the Fifi Island restoration project. Dwayne is starting the Coastal Plant Restoration Center (CPR), a native plant nursery to provide plants to be used in restoration projects. The Coastal Roots project is still an on-going project for LSU. There is a school in Lafayette Parish that has an

Adopt an Island program and they want to adopt Fifi Island. On Saturday, Nov. 13<sup>th</sup>, the Scout troupe that has taken over the green house at Thibodaux High, and the students from Lafayette, took a trip to Grand Isle went out in the state park area where they picked seeds for many native plants to be used in this CPR program. 25,000 seeds were harvested that included Mangroves, toothache trees and also wax myrtle seeds. They also planted live oak tree acorns. He has extra seeds left over along with potting soil and mangrove seeds. David would like to see us all grow a mangrove seed in cup with water, and return it to him at the next management conference.

Susan Bergeron, with USGS, presented the new CWPPRA "Oh Wow!!" map to the MC. She asked for comments and stated that this the last round of comments to be made, and that the poster will go to press very soon.

Andrew MacInnes, Plaquemines Parish, Andrew asked the MC for written and oral support of the project that Plaquemines Parish is submitting as a candidate for the PTL-14 process at a meeting at UNO, on Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>. This project includes sediment delivery to rebuild barrier shoreline. It is called the Schoefield Island Reach project. It will include transporting sediment 10-19 miles. Please write letters to the US Corp Colonel on behalf of this project. NOAA is the federal sponsor for this project.

Jack Fredine, US Army Corp of Engineers, issued a handout to the members regarding the amounts of water released into the Davis Pond area this year. It is about twice the amount placed into the system as last year. They had heavy rainfalls which caused them to shut down the structure at one point, and he mentioned that it was a good salinity year. He also talked about the salinity spike associated with Hurricane Ivan.

Kerry St. Pe informed the MC that the 2005 Tidal graph calendar is out and available for distribution via the members of the management conference.

Jim Rives moved to adjourn.

## **VII. Adjourn**