

Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program

MC Meeting # 40 Minutes

9:00AM-May 10, 2007

Nicholls State University Campus

Plantation Room-Student Union

Thibodaux, LA

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Roll-Call

Management Conference Members Present were:

Herman Waguespack-American Sugarcane League
Mark Ford-Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana
Jason Smith-Jefferson Parish
Joey Breaux-LA Dept. of Ag & Forestry
Karen Leathem-LA Dept. of Culture, Recreation & Tourism
Ann Wilson-LA Dept. of Education
Barbara Romanowsky-LA Dept. of Environmental Quality
Anthony Rousell-LA Dept. of Health & Hospitals
Jerome Zerinque-Louisiana Assoc. of Levee Boards
Tim Allen-Louisiana Landowners Assoc.
Roland Guidry-Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinator's Office
Paul Johnson-Louisiana Science Teacher's Association
Jessica Kastler-LUMCON
David Bourgeois-LSU Ag Center
David Muth-National Park Service
Quenton Fontenot-Nicholls State University
Martha Cazaubon-South Central Planning & Development Commission
Earl Matherne-St. Charles Parish
Al Levron-Terrebonne Parish
Sue Hawes-US Army Corp of Engineers
Dan McQuate-US Coast Guard
Doug Jacobson-US EPA
Heidi Hitter-US Geological Survey
Rick Hartman-US National Marine Fisheries Service
Alton James-USDA/NRCS

Guests present were:

Emelise Cormier-LDEQ
Jan Boydstun-LDEQ
Howard Fielding-LDEQ
Wayne Bourgeois
Dirk Matherne
Jesse Dean-LDEQ
James Miller-Terrebonne Parish
Nickie Buskey-The Houma Courier
Edmond Russo-US Army Corp of Engineers
Mike Trusclair-USDA/NRCS
Ellen Doskey-Terrebonne Tree Board
Sybil Guidry-Terrebonne Tree Board
Gary LaFleur-Nicholls State University

BTNEP Staff Members Present:

Kerry St. Pé
Sandra Helmuth
Susan Testroet-Bergeron
Shelley Sparks

Dean Blanchard
Andrew Barron
Michael Massimi
Mel Landry

B. Reading and Approval of Minutes of the January 18, 2007 meeting

A motion was made by Herman Waguespack to dispense of the reading of these minutes and Rick Hartman seconded it. There was no opposition.

II. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES-Kerry St. Pé

A. Personnel Changes

Resignation of Joni Blanchard
New Hires: Mel Landry-Public Involvement Coordinator
Shelley Sparks-Media Relations Coordinator
Gary Fine

B. Presentations/Exhibits/Field Trips

Houma RV & Boat Show
Western Reserve Historical Society
NSU Preservice Teachers
Eagle Expo
Plover Survey
Lake Verret Field Trip for Legislative Assistants
LSU Culture Awareness Day
Coastal Conservation Assoc. Conference
NSU Jubilee/Cajun Culture Day
LSU Forum on Climate Change
Terrebonne/LDWF Aquatic Clinic

NOAA Senior Executive Service Retreat
Wisconsin Wetlands Assoc-Wetlands
Science Forum
St. Landry Parish K-4 Teacher workshop
Bayou Lafourche: The Longest Street in the
World DVD Premier
Atchafalaya Commission Educ. Committee
to Barataria NPS
Citizen's Monitoring Workshop
Native Garden at Lumen Christi
Lafourche Parish Bicentennial

C. Media Interviews

Wisconsin Public Radio
The Advocate: "Spirit of the Estuary: Using Art to Understand Ecology."
The Daily Comet-oil companies helping to restore Louisiana's wetlands; potential loss of funding for estuary programs across the nation.
Gumbo Entertainment Guide-2007 Paddle Bayou Lafourche
The Houma Courier-pipeline sediment delivery.
KLRZ-2007 Paddle Bayou Lafourche event.
Plaquemines Gazette-Louisiana's proposed coastal restoration plan.
The Times-Picayune: 3 part series on problems facing Louisiana's Wetlands; potential funding cut for estuary programs across the nation.
For additional interviews see press clippings

D. Meetings

Coastal Forestry Advisory Comm.
Migratory Bird Action Plan Team
Woody Gagliano-Conveyance Channel
Children's Discovery Center
CPRA Scoping Meeting
CWPPRA Public Outreach Committee
LDNR Coastal Non-Point Source Meeting

Bayou Lafourche DVD Premier Planning
Meeting
Iberville Parish Environmental Dept.
GOMA Underserved Underrepresented
Populations
La Fete Steering Committee Meeting
Louisiana Aquatic Invasive Species Task

CWPPRA Task Force
WETSHOP Planning Meeting
LDWF Grand Isle Lab Groundbreaking Ceremony
EPA/ANEP Spring Meeting
Pipeline Slurry Video Meeting
Governor's Coastal Advisory Committee

Force Meeting
Education Action Plan Team Meeting
Bayou Region Drinking Water Protection
Meeting
Governor's Comm. On Environmental
Education

E. Projects Initiated:

1. "Distribution and Abundance of Larval Fishes: Transfer of Scientific Data to the Public Through a Multiuse Web Page"-Susan Testroet-Bergeron
2. "Go Native: Discovering and Planting Native Trees in Terrebonne Parish" No cost time extension-Susan Testroet-Bergeron
3. "False River Wetland Education through Maps and Aerial Photography (WETMAAP) Product Development"-Susan Testroet-Bergeron
4. "Louisiana Wetland Library Collection Enhancement for L.E. Fletcher Technical Community College"-Susan Testroet-Bergeron
5. "Graphic Design and Artwork for BTNEP Children's Booklet"-Susan Testroet-Bergeron
6. "Manual of Rare Plants, Animals and Natural Communities of the Louisiana Coastal Zone"- Susan Testroet-Bergeron
7. "Development of the 2008 Bird Calendar Text"-Richard DeMay
8. "Design and Layout of 2008 Bird Calendar"-Richard DeMay
9. "Breeding Biology Study of Wilson's Plovers in Coastal Louisiana-Year 2"-Richard DeMay
10. "Development of Text for a Series of Wood Plant Species Pamphlets"-Richard DeMay
11. "Layout and Design of both the Wading Bird Publication and Woody Plant Pamphlets"-Richard DeMay
12. Contractual marine Debris Removal in Barataria Preserve Projects (Gulf of Mexico Foundation)- Joni Blanchard/Mel Landry

III. Schedule Next Meeting Date: Date Suggested is Thursday, August 9, 2007.

At this time Dr. Gary LaFleur announced that Dr. Earl Melancon would be resigning as NSU's representative on the Management Conference due to time constraints with his new position as Head of the Biology Department. The University has designated Dr. LeFleur as the new representative and Dr. Quenton Fontenot as the alternate.

IV. Action Items

A. FY 2008 Workplan

Kerry prefaced the workplan discussion by telling the MC that for FY07, each NEP is getting \$418,000, which is lower than what each NEP has been getting in the last couple of years, but higher than the original budget of \$388,000.00 proposed in the President's budget request.

This draft BTNEP workplan for fiscal year 2007(October 1, 2007- September 30, 2008) will be submitted to EPA in June. The workplan describes a budget request to EPA for executing the following 27 contractual projects and administrative type budgets.

1. Indirect Charges	\$38,000.00
2. Administrative Funds	5,000.00
3. Program Information Materials	41,500.00
4. BTNEP Mail Hosting/Web Hosting/GIS Hosting Services	12,000.00

5. Content Development of the Tidal Graph Calendar, 2009	5,000.00
6. Layout of the Tidal Graph Calendar, 2009	7,000.00
7. Content Development of the Bird Calendar	6,000.00
8. Layout of Bird Calendar	9,000.00
9. 12 th Annual "La Fete d'Ecologie: Barataria-Terrebonne"	30,000.00
10. Paddle Bayou Lafourche 2008	15,000.00
11. Continuation of BTNEP Volunteer Program	10,000.00
12. BTNEP Mini Grants Program	20,000.00
13. Support for Wetlands/Cultural Day at NSU Jubilee	5,000.00
14. Invasive Plant Control Operations, Equipment and Supplies	5,000.00
15. Birding/Nature Trail On Coastal Birding Trail Site	20,000.00
16. Revise the Document Entitled "Hummingbirds of Louisiana"	6,000.00
17. Grand Isle Bird Day Celebration	3,000.00
18. Wilson Plover Breeding Biology Study Along Selected Sites of LA Coast	15,000.00
19. Birding Trail Signage for the Barataria-Terrebonne Basins	5,000.00
20. Woody Plant Species Distribution Program	10,000.00
21. National Park Service 2008 Wetland Summer Camps Collaboration	5,000.00
22. 2008 Wetshop Teacher Training	7,000.00
23. WETMAAP Training Workshop for False River	13,000.00
24. Teacher to Ranger to Teacher	7,500.00
25. Companion Curriculum for "The Habitats of the Barataria-Terrebonne-Their Importance to Migratory and Resident Birds" Publication	10,000.00
26. BTNEP Web Support 2008	16,000.00
27. BTNEP Personnel	30,000.00
28. Citizen Education Programs	12,500.00
29. Louisiana Native Plant Initiative	10,000.00
30. Resident's Guide to Coastal Restoration	7,500.00
31. Oil & Produced Water Spill Prevention Measures Tidal Graph Calendar	12,000.00
Total FY08 Workplan Budget	\$418,000.00

Rick Hartman stated that it would be nice to see who and how much was contributed to past projects. Kerry informed the MC that BTNEP is responsible for reporting that to EPA and that information is available to share to the MC.

Al Levron stated that from the list of projects it looks like the programs focus is on education and outreach and little pure science. He asked if the program was getting away from that as one of it's goals. Kerry said no, this is a list of how BTNEP is going to spend its FY08 320 funds only. It is not a list of everything BTNEP does. He reminded the MC of how active BTNEP is in planning process of the Habitat Evaluation Team (HET), BTNEP's involvement in Plover surveys, BTNEP involvement in advocating the pipeline sediment strategy, among other scientific activities.

Jessica Kastler expanded on Kerry's statement by saying that the work that BTNEP does enhances the scientific work of others. BTNEP educates the public to understand the science.

She stated maybe the CCMP could be revisited; pick out the action plans that are most applicable post-Katrina, post-Rita and just focus on those action plans. She stated that all it is is public relations and marketing. Kerry agreed with her.

Doug Jacobson stated that most CCMPs, including BTNEP's, are broad enough as to make it still very applicable. He explained that other NEP's have made attempts to revisit their CCMPs. He mentioned

that the Galveston Bay NEP went through such an exercise and that was a very time-consuming process that ended up with very little change to the original CCMP.

Al entertained a motion to approve the FY 2008 Workplan. Roland Guidry made the motion and Jessica Kastler seconded the motion. Doug Jacobson abstained from voting since EPA was the recipient of the workplan.

V. Discussion Items

A. **Louisiana Source Water Protection Program**-Howard Fielding, LA Dept. of Environmental Quality
Mr. Fielding stated that this program was designed to protect drinking water throughout the state funded by

US EPA. He gave a brief history of the program. The goals of the program is to teach the public 1) where their drinking water comes from; 2) why it is important to protect the drinking water source and 3) what they can do to protect it.

The core of the program is to get the community involved by protecting their own drinking water. The program is currently focusing on the non-point sources of contamination, this includes agricultural or urban run-off, run-off from construction and mining. Louisiana has its biggest concerns with urban run-off.

Howard then explained how the program has been implemented along Bayou Lafourche. Some of the issues being faced along Bayou Lafourche are non-native aquatic plants; elevated nutrient levels; sewage plants; low dissolved oxygen and fecal coliform. Some suspected sources for these problems are individual sewage treatment systems not working properly resulting in contaminated run off or direct discharges; urban run off; and agricultural run off.

Howard then explained the process of applying for grants to fund this program in your community. DEQ and DHH feel that reaching out to the local communities on how to protect their drinking water is the best approach to educating the public.

Al Levron asked if the funding for the private sewer system was available through this grant program. Howard stated funding for those systems was available through DEQ's Non-Point Source Grants.

DHH is responsible for inspecting these systems when they are installed, but DHH does not have the staff to go and inspect the older systems and issue compliance orders.

B. **Presentation on La CPR Plan**-Edmond Russo, US Army Corps of Engineers
Edmond Russo stated the plan was as a result of a direction given by the US Congress, to the USACOE, to conduct an analysis and design effort. He stated the difference between this effort and others is that this one is not a feasibility study. It is a technical analysis and design report. This plan is to examine a whole range of flood control coastal restoration and hurricane protection measures.

He stated that the final report is due to Congress in December 2007. The programmatic EIS will be delivered in July 2008 with the Chief's Report, which will have official recommendations. LA CPR is working closely with the State to develop its Master Plan.

The work that is required is to look at a wide array of alternatives that stemmed from very different types of rationale. The reason for that is when going through the evaluation process, we need to be able to distinguish between those wide ranging types of plans, and prepare the stakeholders, make trade-offs with them, inform them of the adverse impacts and let them know how they will benefit from these plans.

Edmond stated that several different types of workshops have been held to assist in the process. Edmond then discussed the risk informed decision framework and how it will be incorporated into the report.

Edmond stated that a Plan Formulation Atlas has just been made available. It inventories measures that have been suggested. The alternatives in the plan will be built from the suggestions in this "tool box" and systematically test how they perform.

The main function of the plan is to determine how high the water gets where and how often. Edmond stated that this process never existed before LA CPR.

Edmond then discussed timelines. He stated that a draft report should be finished in mid-August. In November, the public will be allowed to submit it's input before the final report is submitted to Congress in December.

Edmond then showed the slides of the alternatives in the Barataria-Terrebonne area that are in the Atlas. Kerry asked if these slides were available digitally, and Edmond stated that they are online in pdf form on the LA CPR website.

Kerry asked if any of these alternatives were going to be modeled. Edmond stated that Alternative 4 that was developed by the HET would be modeled.

Edmond then discussed some of the proposed structural and non-structural measures to be used in Barataria-Terrebonne.

A MC member asked that once Congress approves the plan, when would the first project first break ground. Edmond stated the closure of the MRGO would be the first project to begin probably 2 years from authorization of funding.

Edmond encouraged everyone to download the pdfs of the Atlas and send in their comments.

C. 2007 Paddle Trip Update-Shelley Sparks

Shelley gave a brief overview of paddle trip. She stated this was her first time as project coordinator and that the trip went great. She stated there were 120-130 paddlers over the whole trip. The only drawback of the trip was a rainstorm on the Saturday morning. During that down time, the paddlers were shown the DVD "Bayou Lafourche: The Longest Street in the World" at the Jean Lafitte Center in Thibodaux.

D. Grand Isle Bird Celebration Update-Richard DeMay

David Muth gave this update for Richard. David reminded everyone that there was not a celebration in 2006 because Grand Isle was still recovering from Hurricane Katrina. The other two well-known birding sites in Louisiana, Cameron Parish and Venice, are still without infrastructure to hold any birding events. Therefore, organizations like the Louisiana Ornithological Society have moved its annual meeting to Grand Isle.

The Bird Celebration was started up again this year and was its usual success.

The American Birding Association held its annual conference in Lafayette this year asking BTNEP to sponsor a field trip from New Orleans to Grand Isle for conference participants to view birds.

E. "Trees Make a World of Difference" Mini-Grants Project Update-Ellen Doskey, Terrebonne Parish Tree Board

Ms. Sybil Guidry gave a brief history on the Terrebonne Parish Tree Board and what it provides to students and the public.

Ellen Doskey then explained the mini grants project, which was to educate students on the importance of trees and replanting trees, especially after losing so many after Hurricane Katrina. A booklet was developed for the 4-H clubs that included activities. The goal was to choose a tree to plant at a chosen site.

VI. New Business

Michael Massimi announced that the new Resident's Guide is now available. He stated this is the first in a series to be produced. Each will have the same basic format. Other topics will include landscaping with native plants, citizen's guide to water quality in the estuary, invasive species guide, and a guide to coastal restoration.

Andrew Barron informed the MC that they had a copy of an article in front of them from "Non-Point Source News Notes". He stated this month was Wetlands Month and BTNEP was asked to help with an article entitled "Saving Coastal Louisiana". He stated the article is all about pipeline sediment delivery and how the technology works.

David Muth announced that the Jean Lafitte Center in Lafitte was completely remodeled and now houses and coastal land loss exhibit and encouraged everyone to visit the center.

VII. Adjourn