

Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program

MC Meeting # 50 Minutes

9:30AM-December 8, 2009

Nicholls State University

Student Union-Plantation Room

Thibodaux, LA

9:30 AM-9:40 AM

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Roll-Call

Management Conference Members Present:

Herman Waguespack-American Sugarcane League
Hugh Caffery-Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District
John Clark-Iberville Parish
Jason Smith-Jefferson Parish
Jean May-Brett-LA Dept. of Education
Emelise Cormier-LA Dept. of Environmental Quality
Dwayne Bourgeois-LA Assoc. of Levee Boards
Roland Guidry-Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinators Office
Jean May-Brett-Louisiana Science Teacher's Association
John Conover-LUMCON
Randy Lanctot-Louisiana Wildlife Federation
David Muth-National Park Service
Quenton Fontenot-Nicholls State University
Albertine Kimble-Plaquemines Parish
Jo Anna Jones-South Central Planning & Development
Al Levron-Terrebonne Parish
Sue Hawes-US Army Corp of Engineers
Mark McManus-US Coast Guard
Doug Jacobson-US EPA
Susan Testroet-Bergeron-USGS
Rachel Sweeney-US National Marine Fisheries Service
Quin Kinler-USDA/NRCS

Organizations Not Present:

Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana
Coastal Conservation Association of LA
Commercial Fisheries
Governor's Office of Coastal Activities
Greater Lafourche Port Commission
LA Dept. of Ag & Forestry
LA Dept. of Culture, Recreation & Tourism
LA Dept. of Economics
LA Dept. of Health & Hospitals
LA Dept. of Natural Resources
La Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries
Lafourche Parish
LA Association of Conservation Districts
Louisiana Farm Bureaus
Louisiana Forestry Association
Louisiana Independent Oil & Gas Association
Louisiana Mid-Continent Oil & Gas Association
LSU Ag Center
Pointe Coupee Parish

South Louisiana Economic Council
St. Charles Parish
The Nature Conservancy
US Fish & Wildlife Service

Guests:

Cynthia Dubois-NSU Library
Diane Huhn-Bayou Grace
Rebecca Templeton-Bayou Grace
Gloria King-UNO Chart
Murt Conover-LUMCON
Chris Polaski-National Wildlife Federation
Wayne Keller-Grand Isle Port Commission
Cherie Price-US Army Corp of Engineers
Bob Esenwein-Contractor for US Army Corp of Engineers
Al Danos
Leslie Suazo-Terrebonne CZM
Nikki Buskey-The Courier
Robert Thompson-LA Dept. of Environmental Quality

BTNEP Staff:

Kerry St. Pe'
Richard DeMay
Dean Blanchard
Sandra Helmuth
Mel Landry
Michael Massimi
Andrew Barron
Matt Benoit
Shelley Sparks

B. Reading and Approval of Minutes of the September 2, 2009 meeting

A motion was made to dispense of the reading of the minutes, the motion was seconded. There was no opposition to the motion. The motion carries.

9:40 AM-9:50 AM

II. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES-Kerry St. Pé

A. Personnel Change:

Susan Testerot-Bergeron resignation

Kerry announced that Susan has accepted a position with USGS; and she will represent USGS on the MC. He stated that the position of Education Coordinator has been offered and accepted by Ms. Alma Robichaux. She will start on January 4, 2010.

B. Presentations/Exhibits/Field Trips

Avian Bird Survey
Slidell Jr. High COSEE Teacher Sampling
LSU Architecture Students

Terrebonne Garden Club
LPB Electronic Field Trip
Elmer's Island Beach Sweep

La Fete d'Ecologie	LDWF's Cichlid Shocking in Lake Fields
NSU Foundation A+ Scholar Event	Plant ID Course
Bayou Interfaith Shared Community Organizing	WETMAPP-LA Council for the Social Studies
Historical New Orleans Collection visit (Lafourche Middle Schools for oral History project)	Annual Educators Meeting
Natural Ridge Symposium	Ocean Commotion
Zebra Mussel Survey	H-2-O Workshop
Fletcher Community College	Teacher Inservice-wetland plants & BTNEP resources
LSTA/LTMA Conference	Apple Snail Sighting
Maritime Forest Ridge Debris Removal	Short Course on Water Quality at LSTA/LTMA
Cactus Moth Meeting	Maritime Forest Ridge Vegetative Planting-(with Dickinson College)

Richard DeMay informed the MC that in October he gave a presentation at the Natural Ridge Symposium on the Maritime Forest Ridge Project in Fourchon. He stated that BTNEP has initiated several assessments around the ridge and in the future will present updates to the MC.

Michael Massimi informed the MC that he attended a 3-day technical workgroup meeting on the Cactus Moth issue hosted by USDA. The goal now is to keep it out of Texas to keep it away from the prickly pear cactus with is a cash crop there. There are 7 known sites of infestation in Louisiana. So this meeting was put together to discuss options on how to stop the spread.

Jean May-Brett stated that students/teachers assist in tracking the location of cactus moths by sending in GPS co-ordinates. She asked who these co-ordinates should be sent to. Michael stated he would get a contact in the USDA office.

C. Media Interviews

Advocate Ascension Sec. (Baton Rouge/Gonzales)

- "Volunteer prefers sound of nature", September 10, 2009

American Press (Lake Charles, LA)

- "Ag officials work to stop cactus moth", September 6, 2009

Country Roads (St. Francisville, LA)

- *Fairs & Festivals-La Fete d'Ecologie, Thibodaux, LA*, September 2009

Daily Comet(Thibodaux, LA)

- "Cactus moth must be stopped, Ag officials say", September 3, 2009
- "Help clean up Louisiana's newest public beach", September 7, 2009
- "Wetlands pipeline project would help Lafourche", September 7, 2009
- "Scientists monitor invasive weeds, fish", September 8, 2009
- "Environmental festival features fashion, fun", September 12, 2009
- "Can nutria make a fashionable comeback?", September 21, 2009
- "Celebrate environment, Cajun culture Saturday", September 24, 2009
- *Cheers and Jeers: A festive occasion*, September 26, 2009
- *Community Calendar: La Fete d'Ecologie*, September 26, 2009
- "Cautious Optimism-La. May break even on wetlands loss this year, but war not won", October 2, 2009
- "Get you 'Taste of the Estuary'", October 13, 2009
- "Local coastal advocate receives national award", October 14, 2009
- "Help clean up a restored habitat", October 19, 2009

Encore Louisiana (Baton Rouge, LA)

- “Happy Trails”, 2009/2010
- “Kerry St. Pé”, 2009/2010

Gonzales Weekly Citizen

- “Elmer’s Island one our state’s favorite locations for fishing and swimming”, September 11, 2009
- “EASL participates in Elmer’s Island cleanup”, September 25, 2009

Louisiana Outdoors

- “Helping Elmer’s Island”, September 13, 2009

New Orleans Citybusiness (Metairie, LA)

- “Fashion takes a left turn into Louisiana’s swamps”, October 5, 2009

Opelousas Daily World (Opelousas, LA)

- “Cactus moth must be stopped, officials say” September 6, 2009

St. Charles Herald-Guide (Boutte, LA)

- La Fete d’Ecologie Insert, September 24, 2009

The Courier (Houma, LA)

- “Cactus moth must be stopped, Ag officials say”, September 3, 2009
- “Help clean up Louisiana’s newest public beach”, September 7, 2009
- “Pipeline project would help Lafourche”, September 7, 2009
- “Scientists monitor invasive weeds, fish”, September 8, 2009
- “Environmental festival features fashion, fun”, September 12, 2009
- “Can nutria make a fashionable comeback?”, September 21, 2009
- Cheers and Jeers: A festive occasion, September 26, 2009
- Community Calendar: La Fete d’Ecologie, September 26, 2009
- “Cautious Optimism-La. May break even on wetlands loss this year, but war not won”, October 2, 2009
- “Get your ‘Taste of the Estuary’”, October 13, 2009
- “Local coastal advocate receives national award”, October 14, 2009
- “Help clean up a restored habitat”, October 19, 2009
- “Cookbook spotlights culture, resources”, October 27, 2009

The Cameron Parish Pilot (Cameron, LA)

- “Fourth graders planning science/social studies trip”, September 10, 2009

The Daily Advertiser (Lafayette, LA)

- “Cactus moth must be stopped, officials say”, September 5, 2009

The Daily Iberian (New Iberia, LA)

- “Ag officials say must stop moth: Cactus moth eats makes it to Louisiana from Miss.”, September 4, 2009

The Lafourche Gazette (Larose, LA)

- “Elmer’s Island Trash Bash Saturday”, September 16, 2009
- “Volunteer based clean up effort results in success”, September 30, 2009

The Sportsman (Gonzales, LA)

- “EASL and partners host Elmer’s Island Trash Bash”, September 2009
- “Elmer’s Island Trash Bash a big success”, October 2009

The Times-Picayune (New Orleans, LA)

- “Invasive moth found in state, scientists say”, September 5, 2009
- “Cast Net King is back”, September 23, 2009
- “Environmental advisor to review coastal projects”, October 16, 2009

The Tri-Parish Times (Houma, LA)

- “BTNEP partners with O&G to restore coastline”, September 23, 2009

www.thetowntalk.com

- *Beads*, Kerry St. Pe', Gulf Guardian Award Recipient, September 21, 2009

Other interviews:

8/18/2009: Kerry St. Pe' interview with Natalie Dajko for cultural research project for UNO thesis

9/23/2009: KLRZ, Shelley Sparks, La Fete d'Ecologie

10/22/2009: NSU TV, Mel Landry, BTNEP overview and volunteer team

10/27/2009: Al Jazeera English TV, Kerry St. Pe', coastal landloss and restoration in LA

C. Meetings

Lafitte's Hideout Educational CD Planning Mtg.	Environmental Education Commission
Seabird Rookery Atlas Mtg.	LaFete Steering Committee
ORRAP Educational Subpanel Conf. Call	OCPR Stakeholder Mtg. on Pipeline Project
OCPR Partnership Mtg on Pipeline Project	Lafourche CZM
Tricia LeBlanc-Aqua Van Mini-Grant	Louisiana Aquatic Invasive Species Task Force
CPRA	USCOE Public Scoping Meetings
CWPPRA Technical Committee	America's Wetlands "Toast to the Coast"
State Parks Meeting	Brandon LeBlanc-Prep meeting of "Taste of the Estuary"
ConocoPhillips Luncheon	CWPPRA Teleconference
Davis Pond Advisory Meeting	H-2-O Workshop Planning Meeting
NSU Oral History Outreach Project	CWPPRA Task Force Meeting
Environmental Defense Fund Dinner	Aquatic Council & Task Force
Gulf Guardian Award	ANEP/NEP Meeting-Portland, OR
"Taste of The Estuary" Dinner	ORRAP Meeting-Orlando, FL
Davis Pond PDT Meeting	Cactus Moth meeting
Brownsfield Conference	

Kerry announced to the MC that last night, December 7th, BTNEP hosted a meeting with the CEQ and the Gulf Coast Restoration Working Group. He stated this all began with a call to Kerry from Bryon Griffith, the director of the Gulf of Mexico Program, asking if BTNEP could set up a social/discussion with representatives of the MC and people who could potentially be affected by the restoration methods. This event took place at the Woodlands Plantation.

Doug Jacobson congratulated Kerry for receiving the Gulf Guardian Award.

D. Projects Initiated

1. Update and Redesign of the BTNEP Web Sites-R. DeMay
2. Development of a manuscript entitled "Louisiana Hummingbirds"-R. DeMay
3. Monitoring the Avifauna of a Newly Restored Maritime Forest Ridge and Adjacent Marsh and Open Water Habitats-R. DeMay
4. Production of 2009 La Fete d'Ecologie-S. Sparks
5. 2010 WETSHOP Teacher Workshop-S. Testroet-Bergeron

9:50 AM – 9:55 AM

III. Schedule Next Meeting Date: Date Suggested is Wednesday, March 10, 2010.

10:00 AM – 12:10 PM

IV. Discussion Items

- A. **Update on Bayou Lafourche Dredge Project**-Hugh Caffery, Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District
Hugh basically stated that this past summer bids have been taken on the project. He reminded everyone that the legislature allotted \$20million from the then surplus for this project. The bids came back ranging from \$22 to \$27 million. So to fit within the allotted budget of \$20 million, the decision was made to do the project in stages.

The first stage is to clear the 6.2 miles of trees.

The next step is to dredge. A location for the spoil has already been procured. However, another option being discussed is to dump the spoil back into the Mississippi River. Bids are expected to be in by March and dredging should begin in June 2010.

- B. **Scofield Island Update**-Rachel Sweeney, NOAA/National Marine Fisheries Services
Rachel stated that this project, that runs from east of Grand Isle down to Sandy Point area, had started about 10 years ago, and started through the CWPPRA program, but is now also funded by the CIAP program.

She stated the object of the project is to put an advanced deposit of 20 years of sediment to offset subsidence, losses due to shoreline erosion and storm events. The islands are built low, because science shows that when islands are built high you tend to build what is called a collision regime, which means the waves hit the island and transfer that material offshore. The shorelines are being built so that they will continue to roll-back, continue to migrate but maintain a solid shoreline without a lot of holes in it. They are trying to prevent the formation of new inlets.

She stated that most recently construction was completed in June 2009 on the Bay Joe Wise project. She gave details of that project. She informed the MC that sand fencing and vegetative planting will be used to stabilize and build up more sediment on the project. The total project cost was \$35 million.

She stated the biggest problem with these projects is finding high quality sand resources. She stated the Gulf of Mexico does have plenty of sand but in little tiny pockets but most of them are not enough that you would mobilize a \$5 million piece of equipment out there and move it from one place to another. Another limiting factor to mining sand from the Gulf is the extensive infrastructure, oil & gas pipelines and well heads.

She then discussed other sand sources. She stated enough sand has been identified for the projects that are on the books. But those projects only cover 50% of the problem, and these sand sources are not enough to maintain these projects over the 20 years needed in the project goals.

The Scofield Island Project was authorized about 4 years ago by the CWPPRA Task Force. Several issues caused the delay of the project. The biggest being getting the sand from the river, transport distance, navigation issues, pump distances, anchorage areas and cultural resources. Two bar areas were ultimately identified. One located just upstream of Empire and the other located in the vicinity of Ostrica.

The biggest challenge is conveyance of the sediment. Four routes were studied. The one chosen was a direct route through Empire Waterway.

Eight alternatives were looked at and the one selected using the Empire Waterway that has 8-10 feet of water and is a public waterway. A hopper dredge will be used dredging from the bar area upstream from Empire.

Rachel then gave more details on how the project will proceed.

C. Update on Donaldsonville to the Gulf-Bob Eisenwein-US Army Corp of Engineers

Dr. Eisenwein stated that in 1999 recognition was initiated to look at the circumstances in the Barataria Basin in regard to flood damages. This project was formulated for flood damage reduction.

The need for the project was based on heavy rain fall, tidal surges from the Gulf and hurricane flooding. The study area is 2400 sq. miles from Donaldsonville to the Gulf of Mexico, between Lafourche Bridge and Mississippi River.

The project is sponsored by LACPR and the Lafourche Basin Levee District. The study cost was revised from \$6-7 million to \$10.2 million. This increase in cost resulted in the need to incorporate new standards that the Corps has developed for levees since Katrina.

On June 30, 2010, the Alternatives Formulation Briefing will be held. By this time, the final alternative will be selected. A public notice should be issued for the EIS in late 2010, then the administrative record should be complete by March 2011.

The project is currently in the Feasibility Phase. Each alternative is being studied. Dr. Eisenwein then briefly discussed each alternative.

D. State Seashore Concept for the Caminada Headlands-Randy Lanctot, Louisiana Wildlife Federation
Randy stated that with him he had Al Danos, who is the Chairman of the South Lafourche Beachfront Gulf District. Randy stated this is the first preview of this presentation. The first public presentation would be given tomorrow at the CPRA meeting. So he asked that any news coverage be delayed until tomorrow afternoon.

He stated that the establishment of the State Seashore concept is an extension of efforts to restore public access to Elmer's Island and Fourchon Beach at Hwy 3090.

Randy then explained why Caminada Headlands was chosen to be a designated State Seashore. It is the only non-developed conveniently accessible from land 14-mile stretch of shoreline and beach in the state with one of the longest shorelines in the US. He explained there are numerous other reasons as well.

Randy then went over the benefits of Louisiana having a state seashore at Caminada Headlands.

Al Danos stated he hoped that with this state seashore we can preserve the opportunities for families and future generations to enjoy the many recreational uses of the seashore.

Al then discussed the term "development" on the state seashore site. Basically all this would entail is walkways or other low-impact structures that will provide easy access to the public beaches.

Doug Jacobson asked if Randy and Al were asking for endorsement from the MC. Randy stated they

would take all the support they can get as soon as they can possibly get it. He stated there were some issues associated with riparian landowners, one being the Wisner Foundation and the Caillouet Family. Kerry asked what their concerns were, but Randy stated he felt those landowners should speak to that themselves. Al said their concerns are being addressed.

Richard DeMay stated that he was concerned that this program will and is promoting vehicle access to Fourchon Beach, as Elmer's Island does. Al Danos stated the goal is to get people on the beach. At present, there is no back road on Fourchon Beach to access the beach. Presently, you have to park at the end of the road and walk. Families with small children, handicapped and elderly people tend to cluster there at the end of Hwy 3090 because it is difficult to walk far. They are trying to come up with ideas to get people out onto the beach but without tearing it up.

Randy stated he had several copies of the document explaining the whole State Seashore concept that would be presented to CPRA.

E. 2009 La Fete d'Ecologie Review-Shelley Sparks, BTNEP

Shelley reminded the MC that the festival was held on September 26, 2009 at the Jean Lafitte Center in Thibodaux. She stated that La Fete started 13 yrs ago as a way to bring people together to learn about what was going on in coastal restoration, protection, as well as other environmental issues from the people that work in the field.

This year BTNEP required each exhibitor to have some kind of interactive activity dealing with wetlands. There were also new folklife artists this year.

There was some rain in the morning putting a damper on a few events. There was live music and great food. This year BTNEP featured one of its mini-grants recipients, Cree McCree, who developed fashions using nutria pelts. A fashion show was featured with Kerry St. Pe', as the main attraction, modeling a man's complete ensemble.

F. Viewing of "An Introduction to Water Quality Sampling Techniques"-Andrew Barron, BTNEP

Andrew stated that this DVD was a product in collaboration with Murt Conover, LUMCON, Susan Testeroet-Bergeron, BTNEP and Lane Lefort, videographer.

He stated the funding came from a citizen monitoring project Andrew had. He was running into a lot of problems with inconsistent data because the public weren't using consistent data collecting techniques. So he felt this DVD would be useful for citizen monitoring and the LUMCON Bayouside Classroom.

He stated that each chapter of the video would be posted on the BTNEP website.

Andrew then showed the MC a small section of the DVD.

Andrew stated that BTNEP will not mass produce this DVD like the others. But copies will be made available to those directly involved in the citizen monitoring program and Bayouside Classroom, and that it will be available on the website.

VI. New Business

Jason Smith announced that Jefferson Parish has scheduled its Christmas Tree project dates for January 9, 16, 23 and 30th.

Randy Lanctot announced the LWF was accepting nominations for the Conservation Achievement Award for 2009.

Kerry announced that the Oil Spill Prevention Measures Tidal Graph Calendar is now available. He informed the MC that the Fishing Tidal Graph calendar will be available Dec. 15th and you can now order them online and pay for the postage through PayPal.

VII. Adjourn