

Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program

MC Meeting # 52 Minutes

9:30AM-June 2, 2010

Nicholls State University

Plantation Room, NSU Student Union

Thibodaux, LA

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Roll-Call

Management Conference Members Present:

Herman Waguespack-American Sugarcane League
Archie Chaisson-Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District
John Tesvich-Commercial Fisheries
Jason Smith-Jefferson Parish
Ann Wilson-LA Dept. of Education
Emelise Cormier-LA Dept. of Environmental Quality
Carol Crapazano-LA Dept. of Natural Resources
Vince Guillory-LA Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries
Dwayne Bourgeois-Louisiana Assoc. of Levee Districts
Nick Matherne-Lafourche Parish
Tim Allen-Louisiana Landowners Association
Ed Landgraf-Louisiana Mid-Continent Oil & Gas Association
Paul Johnson-Louisiana Science Teachers Association
John Conover-LUMCON
Quenton Fontenot-Nicholls State University
Albertine Kimble-Plaquemines Parish
Al Levron-Terrebonne Parish
Sue Hawes-US Army Corps of Engineers
Mark McManus-US Coast Guard
Doug Jacobson-US EPA
Susan Testroet-Bergeron-USGS
John Boatman-USDA/NRCS

Organizations not represented:

Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana
Coastal Conservation Districts
Governor's Office of Coastal Activities
Greater Lafourche Port Commission
Iberville Parish
LA Dept. of Ag & Forestry
LA Dept. of Culture, Recreation & Tourism
LA Dept. of Economic Development
LA Dept. of Health & Hospitals
Louisiana Assoc. of Conservation Districts
Louisiana Farm Bureau
Louisiana Forestry Association
Louisiana Independent Oil & Gas Association
Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinators Office
Louisiana Wildlife Federation
LSU Ag Center
National Park Service
Pointe Coupee Parish
South Central Planning & Development Commission
South Louisiana Economic Council
St. Charles Parish

The Nature Conservancy
US Fish & Wildlife Service
US National Marine Fisheries Service

Guests:

Cynthia Dubois-NSU Library
Elizabeth Coffman
Ted Hardin
Murt Conover-LUMCON
Darin Lee-LDNR/OCPR
Sue Hennington-USACE
Kirk Cheramie-United Houma Nation
Earl Melancon-NSU Dept. of Biology
Diane Huhn-Bayou Grace
Gary LaFleur-NSU Dept. of Biology
Allyse Ferrera-NSU Dept. of Biology

BTNEP Staff:

Kerry St. Pe'
Sandra Helmuth
Alma Wagner
Dean Blanchard
Mel Landry
Andrew Barron
Matt Benoit
Michael Massimi

B. Reading and Approval of Minutes of the March 10, 2010 meeting

Doug Jacobson made a motion to dispense of the reading of the minutes. Tim Allen seconded the motion. There was no objection. The motion carries.

II. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES-Kerry St. Pé

A. Presentations/Exhibits/Field Trips

NSU Jubilee Swamp Stomp
Retired Teacher's Association
Davis Pond Tour
Rustic Pathways Volunteer Events
Loyola University Alternative Spring Break Volunteer
Event
American Planning Association Tour
Girl Scout Festival
Oil Spill Information Presentations:
Dularge Middle School Presentation
Golden Meadow Upper Elementary
Raceland Middle School
Cut Off Elementary
Larose Upper Elementary
St. Joseph's Catholic School

Fourchon Maritime Forest Ridge Planting
Grand Isle Migratory Bird Celebration
LSU Honors Student Volunteer Event
Holy Savior Teacher Workshop
Bayou Grace Volunteer Event
Paddle Bayou Lafourche
Terrebonne Aquatic Clinic
Grand Isle/Fourchon Plover Survey
Woodland Trails River Boat Cruise
Flyfishermen of New Orleans
LUMCON Leadership Terrebonne
Wine Island/Isle Deniere/Point Aux Fer
Plover Survey
National Park Service Summer Camp

B. Media Interviews (As of May 25, 2010)

Abbeville Meidional (Abbeville, LA)

- *"Volunteers sought for clean-up"*-May 7, 2010

Assumption Pioneer (Napoleonville, LA0)

- *"Paddle Bayou Lafourche: 2010 Back to the Bayou"*-April 8, 2010
- *"Bayou Paddlers Make First Stop At Madewood"*-April 22, 2010

Bayou Journal (Pierre Part, LA)

- *"Paddle Bayou Lafourche 2010: Back to the Bayou"*-March 30, 2010

Daily Comet (Thibodaux, LA)

- *"Hold the halleluahs"* Editorial by Keith Magill, Executive Editor-March 8, 2010
- *Community Calendar-cypress restoration project @ Bayou Segnette*-March 10, 2010
- *"Bayou Lafourche tree-removal project is months ahead of schedule"*-March 11, 2010
- *"Planning tool aims to take politics out of coastal decisions"*-March 11, 2010
- *"Anti-litter campaign begins with city clean-up"*-March 14, 2010
- *"Filmmaker finds inspiration in Terrebonne erosion"*-March 16, 2010
- *"Water-control structure generates great fishing, but few wetland benefits"*-March 24, 2010
- *"Local wetlands project receives grant"*-March 26, 2010
- *"A Link to Life: Barrier-island loss dealing blow to birds"*-March 27, 2010
- *"Back to the Bayou: Paddlers enjoy local culture from a unique vantage point"*-April 2, 2010
- *"Source of oyster illness is still a mystery"*-April 5, 2010
- *"Festival attracts bird lovers to Grand Isle"*-April 16, 2010
- *"New spill estimates mean new worries for fishermen"*-April 29, 2010
- *"Gulf spill puts coastal wildlife at risk"*-April 30, 2010
- *"For Lafourche and Terrebonne, better to act 'as if'"*-April 30, 2010
- *"Black Tide Looms: Shrimp Season to open Monday amid uncertainty"*-May 8, 2010

Ocean Pines Independent

- *"Coastal Bays Oil is the Gulf's Most Unwelcome Guest"*-May 11, 2010

Opelousas Daily World(Opelousas, LA)

- *"Students seek to improve coastal environment"*-March 31, 2010
- *"Barrier-island loss dealing blow to birds"*-April 4, 2010

Southwest Daily News (Sulphur, LA)

- *"Barrier-island loss dealing blow to birds"*-April 4, 2010

The Advocate (Baton Rouge, LA)

- *"Volunteers needed to work at Fifi Island"*-March 30, 2010
- *"Oil spill bears down on La. Coast"*-April 30, 2010
- *"Angling for wildlife education"*-May 3, 2010
- *"Science, Nature Fight to Keep Oil Away"*-May 15, 2010
- *"Big Risks Threaten Gulf"*-May 18, 2010

The Christian Science Monitor

- *"Gulf Oil Spill: Why Booms, in Short Supply, May not Save the Day"*-May 5, 2010

The Courier (Houma, LA)

- *"For the Birds: Annual expo reveals majesty of nature to those attending"*-March 7, 2010
- *Community Calendar-cypress restoration project @ Bayou Segnette*-March 9, 2010
- *"Planning tool aims to take politics out of coastal decisions"*-March 11, 2010
- *"Bayou Lafourche tree-removal project is months ahead of schedule"*-March 11, 2010
- *"New nature trail is now open in Cocodrie"*-March 14, 2010
- *"Anti-litter campaign begins with city clean-up"*-March 14, 2010

- *"Filmmaker finds inspiration in Terrebonne erosion"*-March 16, 2010
- *"Water-control structure generates great fishing, but few wetland benefits"*-March 24, 2010
- *"Local wetlands project receives grant"*-March 26, 2010
- *"Paddle, Paddle: Event draws dozens of participants"*-April 9, 2010
- *"Festival attracts bird lovers, families to Grand Isle this weekend"*-April 16, 2010
- *"Biologists school students in the science of fishing"*-April 22, 2010
- *"Fishermen keeping their eyes on Gulf"*-April 28, 2010
- *"Eyes on Gulf as Oil Slick Grows"*- April 28, 2010
- *"New spill estimates mean new worries for fishermen"*-April 29, 2010
- *"For local parishes, better to act 'as if'"*-April 30, 2010
- *"From fishermen, lawsuits, promises to help"*-May 1, 2010
- *"Terrebonne, Lafourche Face Different Challenges"*-May 11, 2010
- *"Oil Hits Fourchon Beach"*-May 15, 2010
- *"Dularge Shrimpers Report Oil in Catch"*-May 18, 2010

The Crowley Post-Signal (Crowley, LA)

- *"Volunteers sought for clean-up"*-May 6, 2010

The Daily Advertiser (Lafayette, LA)

- *"Barrier-island loss dealing blow to birds"*-April 4, 2010
- *"Wetland center ready to help"*-April 29, 2010

The Daily Iberian (New Iberia, LA)

- *"Students schooled in science of fishing"*-May 3, 2010

The Huffington Post

- *"Oil Spill Seafood: Is Wild Gulf Shrimp Better than Farmed?"*-May 10, 2010
- *"Fire on the Bayou"*-April 30, 2010

The Lafourche Gazette (Larose, LA)

- *"Paddle people..."* April 18, 2010

The News-Star (Monroe, LA)

- *"Students schooled in science of fishing"*-May 2, 2010

The Plaquemines Gazette (Belle Chasse, LA)

- *"May 15 Woodlands Trail's Riverboat Cruise"*-May 4, 2010

The Times (Shreveport, LA)

- *"Barrier-island loss dealing blow to birds"*-April 4, 2010
- *"Students schooled in science of fishing"*-May 2, 2010

The Times-Picayune (New Orleans, LA)

- *"Five Times as Much Oil Spewing in Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill as First Thought"*-April 28, 2010
- *"Oil slick may reach La. Coast Friday"*-April 29, 2010
- *"Gulf Sill is Really a River"*-April 29, 2010
- *"Gulf of Mexico Oil Could Involve Heavier Grade of Oil"*-April 30, 2010
- *"This isn't a spill. This is much, much worse."*- April 30, 2010
- *"Oil may be a stickier problem"*-May 1, 2010
- *"Way Hasn't Oil Drenched the Coast?"*-May 4, 2010
- *"Volunteers lining up to help fight oil spill"*-May 4, 2010

The Tri-Parish Times (Houma, LA)

- *"Bayou Lafourche is expecting company"*-March 31, 2010
- *"Lafourche Launches Litter Campaign: Hazardous Materials to be collected April 24"*-April 7, 2010
- *"Local fishermen sit and wait for oil to stop spewing"*-May 5, 2010

Town Favorites (Baton Rouge, LA)

- “2nd Annual Swamp Stomp Festival to Feature Regional Bands, Promote Cajun Culture”, March 2010

USA Today

- “Gulf Coast Oil Spill:How to Help”-May 1, 2010

Wall Street Journal

- “Slick Well Inundated with Dispersants”-May 5, 2010

Zachary Plainsman-News (Zachary, LA)

- “Zachary Area Homeschooler Team A win 2010 Envirothon competition”-April 28, 2010

Other interviews:

WWL Radio with Garland Robinette. (Interview). April 29, 2010. Kerry St. Pé
The Weather Channel. (Live and Taped interview). April 30, 2010. Kerry St. Pé
NBC Nightly News. (Interview). April 30, 2010. Kerry St. Pé
The Today Show. (Interview). April 31, 2010. Kerry St. Pé
NPR’s “Between the Lines”. (Interview) May 5, 2010. Kerry St. Pé
NPR’s “Between the Lines”. (Interview) May 9, 2010. Kerry St. Pé
WWLTV. (Interview). May 6, 2010. Kerry St. Pé
FOX8 New Orleans. (In studio). May 9, 2010. Kerry St. Pé
CW 39. (Taped segment). Houston, TX. May 19, 2010. Mel Landry
CW 39. (Taped segment). Houston, TX. May 20, 2010. Mel Landry
CW 39. (Taped segment). Houston, TX. May 21, 2010. Mel Landry
WWLTV. (Interview). May 20, 2010. Andrew Barron and Dean Blanchard
LPB. (Washing Away Update). May 21, 2010. Kerry St. Pé

C. Meetings

ORRAP-Arlington, VA	Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District
Education Action Plan Team	Groundwater Task Force
Invasive Species Panel	Migratory Bird Action Plan Team
Center for Planning Excellence`	Restore America’s Wetlands
Zebra Mussel Master’s Thesis	EPA Webinar-Federal Coordination
Lafourche CZM	Davis Pond Modification Meeting
Davis Pond PDT Meeting	Southeast Exotic Pest Plant Council
NOAA Coastal Management Review for LDNR	Meeting
DEQ Staff-Fecal Coliform in Bayou Lafourche	NRCS-Vallisneria Project

D. Projects Initiated

1. “2010 Terrebonne Aquatic Clinic”-A. Robichaux
2. “2010 BTNEP Website Support” (Amendment)-S. Sparks

III. Schedule Next Meeting Date: Date Suggested is Wednesday, September 1, 2010.

IV. Action Item

FY 2011 Workplan (1 hr.)

This draft workplan for fiscal year 2011(October 1, 2010- September 30, 2011), will be submitted to EPA in June. The workplan describes a budget request to EPA for executing 24 contractual projects and several administrative type budgets.

Kerry informed the MC that for FY2011, BTNEP will receive \$800,000. With state budget cuts, he stated that the program will have to use a portion of these funds to supplement its state budget. The program will have a hard time matching these federal funds, but will use non-federal funds put towards partnership projects to make the match.

The workplan projects presented to the MC were:

Indirect Charges	\$72,727.27
Building Rental	\$28,795.00
Travel Funds	\$30,000.00
BTNEP Personnel & Fringe	\$140,800.00
BTNEP Student Worker Funding	\$12,000.00
Distribution of BTNEP Information Materials	\$100,000.00
Administrative Funds	\$10,000.00
BTNEP Mail Hosting/Web Hosting/GIS Hosting	\$12,000.00
BTNEP Web Support	\$20,000.00
15 th Annual La Fete d'Ecologie	\$40,000.00
Paddle Bayou Lafourche 2011	\$15,000.00
Layout of the 2011 Tidal Graph Calendar	\$9,000.00
BTNEP Invasive Species Mini Grant Program	\$20,000.00
Support for Wetlands/Cultural Day at NSU Jubilee	\$5,000.00
Birding/Nature Trail on Coastal Birding Trail Site	\$46,677.73
Layout of the Humming Bird Publication	\$15,000.00
Layout of the 2011 Bird Calendar	\$9,000.00
Development of a Colonial Shorebird Nesting Site on Grand Isle	\$30,000.00
Plover Reserve on Grand Isle	\$10,000.00
2011 from H-2-O: A Water Quality Workshop for Teachers	\$7,500.00
2011 Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve Wetlands Camps	\$6,000.00
2011 Louisiana Environmental Education Symposium	\$5,000.00
2011 Terrebonne Aquatic Clinic	\$4,000.00
Bayou French Tent-Educational Component of NSU's Louisiana Swamp Stomp	\$2,000.00
2011 Eagle Expo Student Educational Program	\$5,000.00
Cogonrass Detection and Control	\$15,000.00
Redevelopment of Invasive Species Web Pages	\$12,000.00
Resident's Guide to Oil Spills in the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Area	\$7,000.00
Grand Isle Maritime Forest Restoration	\$25,000.00
Oil & Produced Water Spill Prevention Measures Tidal Graph Calendar	\$16,000.00
Continuation of BTNEP Volunteer Program	\$50,000.00
Festival International de la Louisiane	\$4,500.00
BTNEP Website Project Content Summaries	\$15,000.00
Total	\$800,000.00

After Kerry gave a brief description of each project, Gary LaFleur asked if the fence at the Grand Isle State park was to keep people out of the area. Dean Blanchard said mostly predators such as coyotes, but the signage would be used to keep the public out also.

Susan Testroet-Bergoron made a motion to accept the workplan, Archie Chaisson seconded the motion. There were no questions or comments. There was no further discussion. A vote was taken and approved with one abstention by Doug Jacobson.

V. Discussion Items

A. BP Oil Spill Impacts

1. Impacts on Oysters-Dr. Earl Melancon, NSU

Earl informed the MC that he currently has a 8-year CWPPRA project in Terrebonne Bay. He stated one site of the project has been impacted by the oil. He has seen oil along the shoreline. He stated no oyster samples have been taken yet. He is finding that the oil is up in the grass but none has been found in any of his structures below water. He has seen on his structures encrusting barnacles and other associated type organisms that don't appear to be impacted at this time. He is also seeing small fish laying their eggs in the oyster shells.

He stated that he is optimistic that what he is seeing may not be as catastrophic as he thought it might be. He said the state is putting massive volumes of freshwater into the system through every diversion possible. He stated that water temperatures are already at 90 degrees. When you have significant freshwater and low salinity, you will have a significant impact on the oyster populations. With the oil coming in from the Gulf, that oil is impacting on inter-tidal shallow water oysters. And those are the most vulnerable and will be the most significantly impacted IF oil hits them.

If there is a failed spat set this season, there will be no way to really tell if it is due to the oil spill. Earl stated he's never seen a failed spat set in Terrebonne Bay before. He stated he will know in about 3 weeks if the spat set has failed.

Earl stated he attended the Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board meeting two weeks ago. He stated that people with the Board stood up and stated that consumer confidence has been totally eroded in this country for Louisiana seafood. Restaurants in the country are putting up signs that they are not serving Louisiana seafood.

John Tesvich asked Earl if the opening of the Davis Pond Diversion made a difference in the oil impact in the estuary. Earl stated in the long haul, no. He stated what he has experienced with Davis Pond is that this time of year with southeasterly winds, which prevails, is a tendency to push water into the system; oil is going to come up with it. When those winds subside, that dark decaying water will hit the system. Oysters will clam up and survive for a day or two. But other animals and fish will not.

2. Fisheries Impacts-Vince Guillory, LA Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries

Vince stated he is much more concerned about the impacts on our fisheries than on our natural resources. He stated our natural resources can recover, however, our fisheries may not. We won't know what the overall impacts are on our economics and fisheries until after all the oil is gone. Vince handed out two maps of all the fishery closures. The maps show there has been a dramatic impact already.

LDWF funded an economic study of fisheries and wildlife in Louisiana using 2003 data. Shrimp, oyster and blue crab are Louisiana's dominant in-shore commercial fisheries in the BTNE. On a

state-wide basis, these three fisheries support over 20,000 jobs, generate annual earnings of \$287 million and have a total economic effect of \$1.8 billion. The recreation fisheries, on a state-wide basis, support 83,000 jobs and generate annual earnings of \$190 million and have a total economic effect of \$793 million. The study did not, however, breakdown the data by basin. But the BT estuary comprises a significant portion of our fisheries.

The BT estuary produces 71% of the brown shrimp landings, 75% of the oyster landings, approximately 2/3 of the blue crab landings, 10% of oyster landings from public oyster grounds.

Vince stated there have been a number of impacts on the fishing industry. There have been closures, loss of critical fisheries infrastructure (docks and plants) and the continued decline in numbers of commercial fishermen.

- 3. Natural Resources Damage Assessment-Darin Lee, LA Dept. of Natural Resources**
Darin stated that NOAA has taken the lead in the NRDA process and plans are being developed and some are already in place. Monitoring was taking place before the oil spill took place and now monitoring is taking place in the affected areas. The monitoring ranges from deepwater coral impacts to SAVs to marshes to fish and water quality. He stated there are NRDA teams out everywhere. However, the impacts really have not been looked at yet. Only the location of where oil has been found and the severity of it have been documented.

Earl suggested that the MC call upon CPRA to update the public on what agencies are doing what throughout this whole process.

Kerry stated he has had conference calls with the ANEP and the ANEP Board has taken Kerry's recommendation that each NEP write a letter to EPA requesting that the NEPs impacted by this oil spill is a part of this NRDA process. He stated that these NEPs expect to be a part of this process and to determine what kind of damages has to be paid by the responsible party.

- 4. Update on US Coast Guard Activities-Mark McManus, US Coast Guard**
Mark informed the MC that the Coast Guard was responsible for setting up the Incident Command Centers for the oil spill. The Morgan City Unit is dealing with parish EOC's. Mark stated that the two he has the most focus on are Lafourche and Terrebonne. He stated that they are making sure that the local concerns are being addressed in a quick and rapid fashion.

He stated that some of the issues the Coast Guard is dealing with are housing for workers and making sure navigational canals are safe.

Gary LaFleur asked if there were cleaning stations for boats. Mark said there were 17 decontamination sites; one in Cocodrie, two in Fourchon, a few along Southwest Pass and the entrance of the Mississippi River and further east along the coast of Mississippi.

- 5. Update on Bird Surveys-Dean Blanchard, BTNEP**
In Richard DeMay's absence, Dean gave a brief update on bird surveys.
- 6. Spill Associated Volunteer Efforts-Mel Landry, BTNEP**
Mel gave a presentation on volunteer efforts since the oil spill and supply donations given for the oil spill clean up.
- 7. Spill Associated Media-Shelley Sparks, BTNEP**
The MC was presented with a power point presentation in Shelley's absence on media

interviews since the oil spill.

8. Spill Associated Environmental Impacts-Kerry St. Pe', BTNEP

Kerry reminded the MC that he worked 25 years for the Water Pollution Control Division under LA Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries and eventually that division was moved to the Dept. of Environmental Quality. One of his duties during that time was to respond to oil spills. He served as state on-scene coordinator for this region and covered 100's of oil spills per year. There was usually no media coverage for these spills. The largest spill, Kerry stated, he covered in those 25 years, was a 10,000 barrel spill in Lake Barre'. This current spill surpassed that spill in two days. The ecological damage of that spill to the Terrebonne estuary was far greater than this current spill, but there is far more oil in the Gulf. But the impacts from the Deepwater Horizon Spill to our fisheries and culture now are far greater. Kerry stated BP will never be able to compensate for all the losses.

Kerry then explained the toxicity, solubility and chemical makeup of oil, and its effects on the environment.

Kerry then discussed dispersants and their use and impacts. He also discussed the effects of oil on various plants.

Kerry said the BTNEP could not support sand berms. Kerry has been asked for his opinion of them from several people and he has freely given it. He stated the sand berms were originally going to be a continuous sand levee with a 21 to 1 slope, 20 ft. across, 6 ft. high. Kerry's concern is how long will the sand berm last. Another concern is not only are you affecting the ingress and egress of the fishery organisms, but you are changing the whole hydrology, changing the time it takes water to leave the estuarine system, you are restricting the flow of water out of the estuary and where is the sand going to come from. He stated he is concerned that the sand will no longer be available for legitimate coastal restoration of the barrier islands.

Kerry then gave his opinion on using rock dikes as a oil protection technique. Rocks will keep sand from moving from one place to another.

Kerry then voiced his opinion on the Incident Command System. He feels there is not enough information getting out to the public from the state and federal government.

He stated that his role has been to spread facts on the impacts of the spill. The BTNEP's media and volunteer program have played an important role in this effort.

VI. New Business

VII. Adjourn