

Annual Report 2018

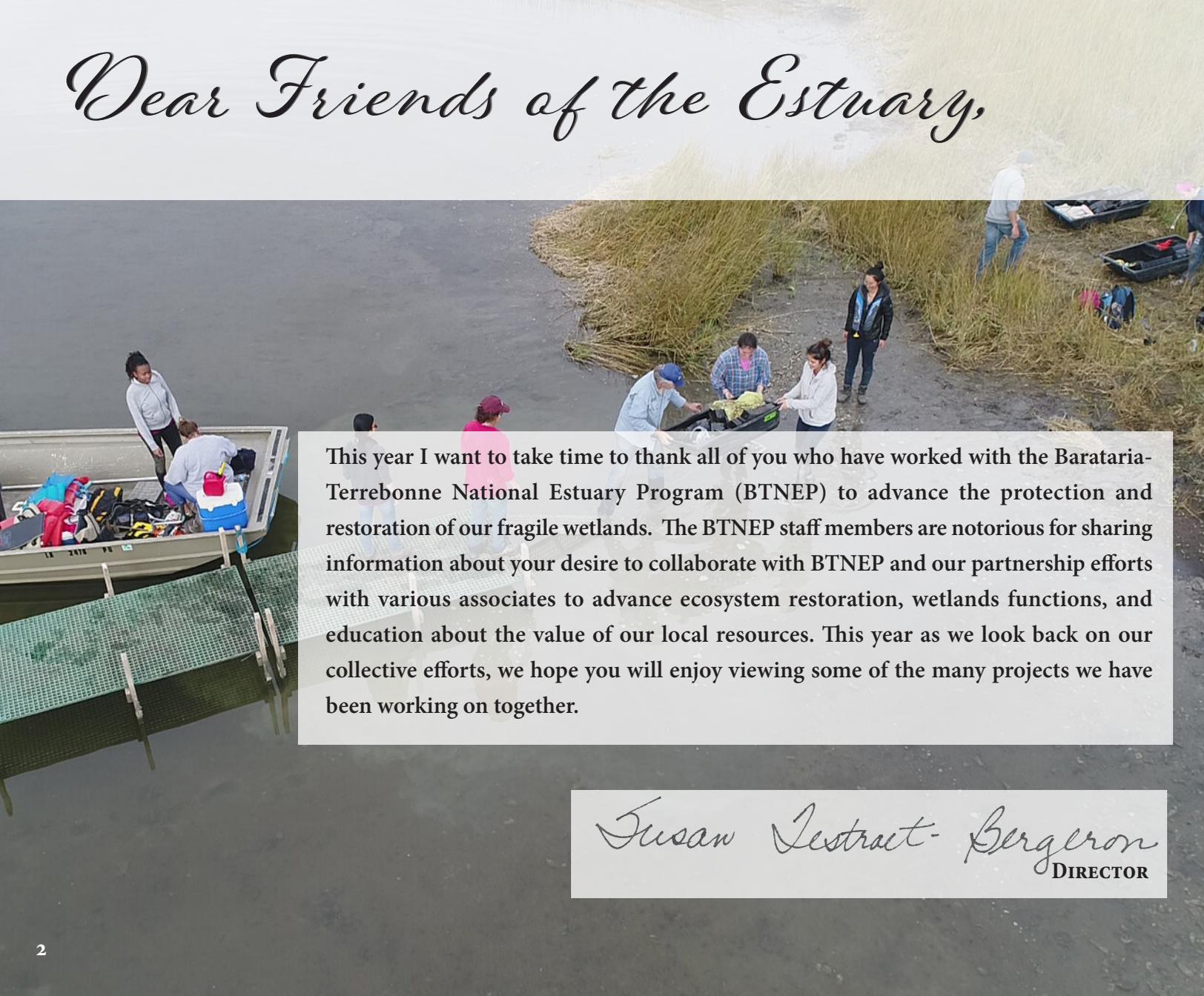


Photo: Lane Lefort

ESTUARY ISSUES • SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH • WATER QUALITY
COMMUNITY OUTREACH • HABITAT ENHANCEMENT • EDUCATION
EVENTS • ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION • SPECIES ASSESSMENT



Dear Friends of the Estuary,

A group of people are working in a wetland area. In the foreground, a boat is docked on a green mat. Several people are standing on the mat and in the water, some are handling equipment. In the background, there are tall grasses and more people working. The scene is outdoors and appears to be a field site for environmental work.

This year I want to take time to thank all of you who have worked with the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BTNEP) to advance the protection and restoration of our fragile wetlands. The BTNEP staff members are notorious for sharing information about your desire to collaborate with BTNEP and our partnership efforts with various associates to advance ecosystem restoration, wetlands functions, and education about the value of our local resources. This year as we look back on our collective efforts, we hope you will enjoy viewing some of the many projects we have been working on together.

Susan Textract-Bergeron
DIRECTOR

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Learn More About BTNEP



Photo: Lane Lefort

DO YOU KNOW WHAT AN ESTUARY IS?

An estuary is a coastal area where salt water from the ocean mixes with freshwater from rivers, rainfall, and upland runoff. Within an estuary, salt water and freshwater proportions differ daily depending on the season, weather, and tides. Vital coastal ecosystems exist in these constantly changing conditions.

Where is the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary?

Louisiana's Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary System (BTES) is located between the Mississippi and Atchafalaya Rivers in south Louisiana. Bayou Lafourche separates this complex into two basins, the Barataria Basin to the east, and the Terrebonne Basin to the west.

CAN YOU NAME SOME OF THE HABITATS IN THE ESTUARY?

Examples of the dynamic habitats that are included in the BTES are: swamps, marshes, beaches, oyster reefs, mangrove forests, river deltas, and sea grasses. Estuarine environments such as the BTES are among the most biologically productive on Earth.

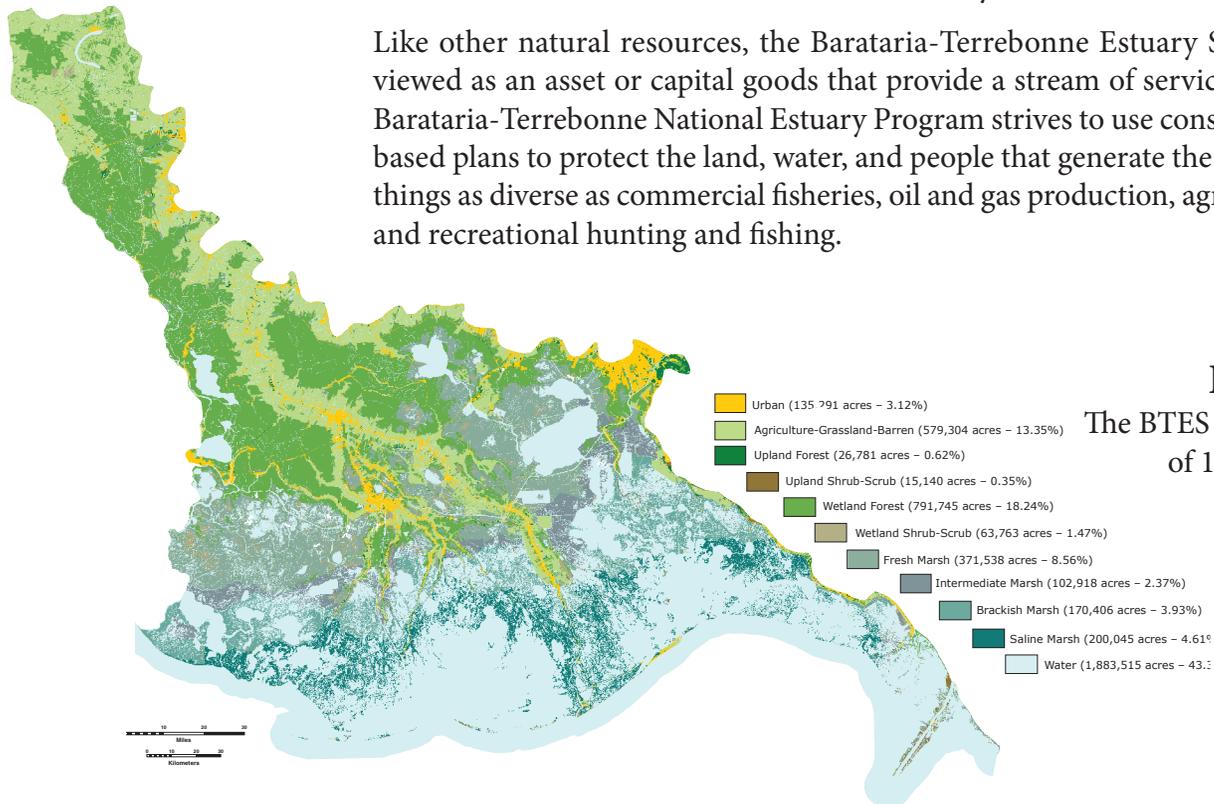


Photos: Lane Lefort

Our Mission

The mission of the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BTNEP) is the preservation and restoration of the estuarine system. BTNEP strives to rebuild and protect the estuary for future generations through the implementation of a science-based, consensus-driven Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan that utilizes partnerships focused on the estuary's cultural, economic and natural resources. BTNEP is funded through the Environmental Protection Agency's 320 Clean Water Act, the State of Louisiana, and the Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary Foundation a 501(c)3.

Like other natural resources, the Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary System (BTES) can be viewed as an asset or capital goods that provide a stream of services to humankind. The Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program strives to use consensus-driven, science-based plans to protect the land, water, and people that generate the valuable economics of things as diverse as commercial fisheries, oil and gas production, agriculture, shipbuilding, and recreational hunting and fishing.



DID YOU KNOW?

The BTES consists of all or part of 16 Louisiana parishes.





Photo: Lane Lefort

What Does BTNEP *Do?*

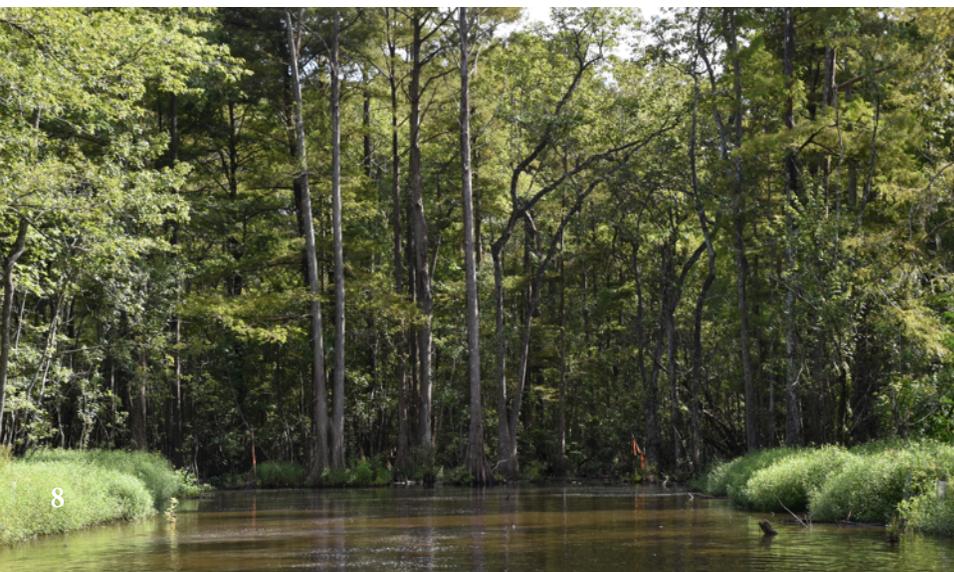
- Water quality projects
- Ecological management projects
- Habitat enhancement projects
- Projects that protect native species and control invasive species
- Scientific research
- Species assessments
- Promotion of nature-based recreation
- Volunteer activities
- K-12, public education, and outreach
- Production of science-based publications for public education
- Provide an open forum to discuss estuary issues



Priority Problems and Issues

7 PRIORITY PROBLEMS OR ISSUES AFFECTING THE ESTUARY

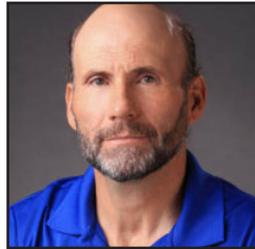
- Hydrologic Modification
- Change in Living Resources
- Habitat Loss
- Toxic Substances
- Pathogens
- Reduction in Sediment Availability
- Eutrophication



Meet the BTNEP Staff



NICOLE BABIN
OFFICE COORDINATOR



ANDREW BARRON
SR. WATER RESOURCES
COORDINATOR & QUANTITY
ASSURANCE MANAGER



MATT BENOIT
HABITAT RESTORATION
COORDINATOR



DEAN BLANCHARD
DEPUTY DIRECTOR



RICHARD DEMAY
SENIOR SCIENTIST



DELAINA LEBLANC
MIGRATORY BIRD
COORDINATOR



MICHAEL MASSIMI
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTIST &
INVASIVE SPECIES
COORDINATOR



SETH MONCRIEF
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT
COORDINATOR



SIVA NUNNA
WATER QUALITY SCIENTIST



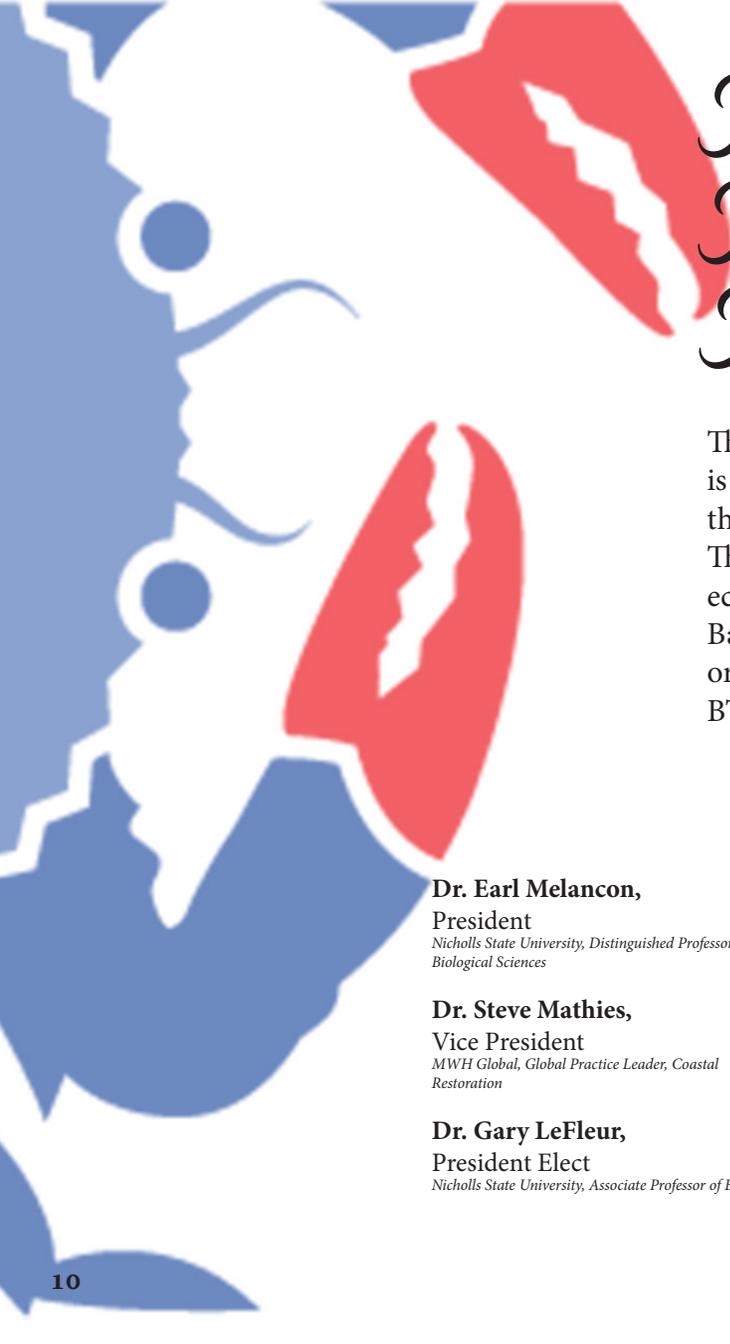
ALMA ROBICHAUX
EDUCATION/OUTREACH
COORDINATOR



SUSAN TESTROET-BERGERON
DIRECTOR



NATALIE WATERS
BIRD CONSERVATION
COORDINATOR



The Barataria- Terrebonne Estuary Foundation

The mission of the Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary Foundation (BTEF) is to involve a representation of a broad base of people to support the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BTNEP). This includes supporting the mission of stewardship of the cultural, economic, and ecological resources of the Barataria and Terrebonne Basins. Formed in 1995, the Foundation is the fund-raising organization for the benefit of the BTNEP. For more information on BTEF, visit www.supportBTNEP.org.

BTEF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dr. Earl Melancon,
President

*Nicholls State University, Distinguished Professor of
Biological Sciences*

Dr. Steve Mathies,
Vice President

*MWH Global, Global Practice Leader, Coastal
Restoration*

Dr. Gary LeFleur,
President Elect

Nicholls State University, Associate Professor of Biology

Mr. Nolan Falgout,
Treasurer

First American Bank and Trust, Chief Financial Officer

Mr. Matt Sevier,
Board Member

CBI, Scientist Coastal Division

Mr. Bill Eroche,
Board Member

Watkins, Walker, Eroche & Hoychick, Attorney

Dr. Allayne “Laynie” Barrilleaux,
Board Member

*Nicholls State University, Academic Affairs Vice President
(retired)*

Mr. Dwayne Bourgeois,
Board Member

Executive Director, North Lafourche Levee District

Donors Help to Make It Possible

We have also been honored by so many generous donors who help to keep our program running. Many thanks to each of you for your kind and charitable support. One particular event, our annual White Boot Gala, helps provide support for the program. If you missed this year's event, you can see a snippet of the fun at <https://btnep.org/resources/videos-and-films>.



Photo from Promotional Video



BTNEP *Management Conference*

Upon inclusion in the National Estuary Program, a diverse group of stakeholders was assembled including government, business, scientists, conservation organizations, agricultural interests, and individuals. This group, the BTNEP Management Conference (MC), ensures a place for the voice of all that live, work, and play in the BTES.

The BTNEP MC has several functions. The primary function is to encourage and oversee implementing the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan by coordinating and integrating the CCMP actions among agencies and stakeholders. In addition, the BTNEP MC maintains an interchange with other similar federal, state, and local planning efforts and reviews and modifies the implementation of the CCMP as conditions change over time. Finally, the BTNEP MC fosters and expands the use of participatory, voluntary, and incentive-based approaches to decision-making in the estuary.

Management Conference Members

American Sugar Cane League	LA Department of Natural Resources	Sassafras Louisiana
Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District	LA Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	South Central Planning & Development
Cajun Music Preservation Society	Lafourche Parish Government	Commission
Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana	LA Association of Conservation Districts	South Louisiana Economic Council
Coastal Conservation Association of LA	LA Association of Levee Boards	South Louisiana Wetlands Discovery Center
Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority	LA Forestry Association	St. Charles Parish Government
Commercial Fisheries	LA Independent Oil & Gas Association	St. John Parish Government
Governor's Office of Coastal Activities	LA Landowners Association	Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government
Greater Lafourche Port Commission	LA Mid-Continent Oil & Gas Association	The Nature Conservancy
Iberville Parish Government	LA Oil Spill Coordinators Office	US Army Corps of Engineers
Jefferson Parish Government	LA Science Teachers' Association	US Coast Guard
LA Department of Agriculture & Forestry	LA Wildlife Federation	US Department of Agriculture's - Natural
LA Department of Culture, Recreation & Tourism	Lowlanders Center	Resource Conservation Service
LA Department of Economic Development	LSU Ag Center and Sea Grant	US Environmental Protection Agency
LA Department of Education	LUMCON	US Fish & Wildlife Service
LA Department of Environmental Quality	Nicholls State University	US Geological Survey
LA Department of Health & Hospitals	Plaquemines Parish Government	US NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service
	Pointe Coupee Parish Government	US National Park Service

BTNEP *Projects, Partners & Volunteers*

With the help of our many partners and volunteers, BTNEP is able to complete regular and special projects in our estuary. These projects improve water quality, restore habitat, and ensure that the estuary is in the best possible shape for its inhabitants. Outreach and education are also integral to fulfilling the BTNEP mission.

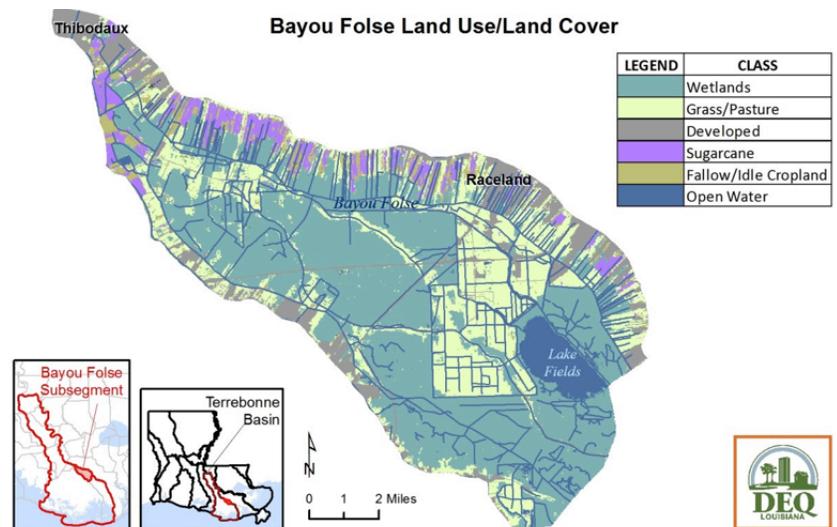
Partners in Surface Water Quality Improvements

This year, BTNEP, working with our Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary Foundation (BTEF), received a grant for \$426,874 from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Gulf of Mexico Program for an important water quality project. As most of the drinking water in the estuary comes from surface water, this project will focus on the repair of home sewage systems through a cost-share incentive and education program in the Bayou Folsé Watershed of the Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary System (BTES). Funds will be used as a cost incentive (50% of cost up to \$1,000) to pay for repairing or replacing malfunctioning “on site disposal systems” (OSDS) in targeted parts of the watershed. The targeted neighborhoods will be identified through an ongoing water quality sampling project being conducted by the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BTNEP) and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ). Partnering with the South Central Planning and Development Council (SCPDC), we will go to targeted neighborhoods, sign up residents for the volunteer program, and provide education on OSDS maintenance.



Photo: Lane Lefort

BTNEP and LDEQ sampling water.



Cohorts in Oil Spill Prevention

This project partnered efforts between the Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary Foundation (BTEF), the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BTNEP) and the Coastal and Marine Operators (CAMO) Pipeline Industry Initiative for the specific purpose of targeting educational efforts for pipeline oil spill prevention, gas release prevention, and accident prevention. The Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary System houses a dense network of marine natural gas and liquid pipelines which make up part of an estimated 63,000 miles of pipelines in coastal Louisiana and the Gulf of Mexico. Over 1.5 million barrels of crude oil and 10 billion cubic feet of gas are transported via pipelines each day and supply nearly 30% of the US energy needs.

Most serious risks to human life and the environment are due to accidents caused by vessel interactions to pipelines through boat collisions and anchoring, and spud barge mooring, all of which occur in the BTES. This spill prevention effort over the course of the year brought together people using direct meetings and various outreach tools including print and video.

The new promotional video for oil spill prevention is posted at <https://waterquality.btnep.org/projects/oil-spill-prevention> or on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/BTNEP



Photos from Promotional Video

A group of people are paddling several orange and yellow canoes down a narrow waterway. The waterway is surrounded by dense, lush green trees and vegetation, creating a shaded and natural environment. The people are wearing casual outdoor attire, including hats and life jackets. The scene is bright and sunny, with sunlight filtering through the trees.

Outreach Together: Discover the Estuary

The Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program has always been unique amongst the National Estuary community nationwide not just for the incredibly wide diversity of the living and natural resources, habitat types, and distinct cultures, but because we are so connected to the wetlands that make up our estuary. During the month of September, BTNEP hosted a paddling trip that went down Bayou Chevreuil (shev-RILL) near Chackbay. The goal of the trip was to provide the public with an opportunity to recognize, understand, and value the rich natural and cultural resources of our estuarine system, as well as to enhance opportunities for folks to appreciate the quality and the quantity of nature-based and cultural experiential tourism in the estuary. It was a great learning experience for us all.



Our Volunteers

a big-hearted group of tireless people

Many volunteers have worked with us this year. BTNEP hosted hundreds of volunteers both at our Native Plant Production Facility at the Nicholls State University Farm and in the field. Individuals and partner groups volunteer to help BTNEP with a variety of projects including plant propagation, marsh plantings, woody species plantings, and office support.





Yaupon

Plant Habitat Restoration Activities

with State and Federal Partners

This year BTNEP also expanded its shade house which now provides an 80 ft by 80 ft growing area for our native plant species propagation efforts. Staff has partnered with the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) and the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA) scientists to grow out woody species such as live oak, red mulberry, hackberry, wax myrtle, yaupon, persimmon, and American beautyberry. The woody plants will be planted on the ridge portions of the CWPPRA Bayou Dupont (BA-48) and Grand Liard (BA-68) projects in Jefferson and Plaquemines Parish, respectively. Additionally, work continues to grow out plants for the Spanish Pass Ridge Restoration project lead by the US Army Corps of Engineers in partnership with CPRA.

Consensus-Driven Decision Making an ongoing part of the BTNEP community

For many of you our quarterly BTNEP Management Conference meetings provide a venue to learn new information, help BTNEP plan upcoming work, and network with peers to advance our efforts to improve water quality issues in our estuary. We thank all of you who quarterly make time to help guide our program and help us find science based consensus-driven solutions.

BTNEP Management Conference Meeting #85 | November 2018



Cleaning Up the Estuary Together

In partnership with the Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District and other local sponsors, BTNEP hosted the Bayou Lafourche Cleanup this spring. BTNEP, partnering with Nicholls State University, also cohosted the International Coastal Cleanup on Elmers Island in September.





BTNEP Staff engage with students at local festivals.



Students explore BTNEP floor map of Louisiana with BTNEP staff.

Education: a Team Effort

Collaborative teaching and learning are cornerstone activities for BTNEP and our partners as we seek to advance environmental education efforts. Whether you see staff at the Louisiana Science Teachers Association meeting with a floor map of our state, or at festival or microplastic workshop, the goal is always the same – making a difference for the next generation.

VOLUNTEERS

by the numbers

36 TOTAL VOLUNTEER
EVENTS

5 volunteer plantings,
resulting in:

5,444 herbaceous plants **50** woody plants

22 BTNEP Native
Plant Production
Facility Events

1 Bayou Lafourche
Clean Up Event

3 Educational
Paddle Trips

1 Paddle Bayou Lafourche





Habitat Enhancement Migratory Birds

For many years we have been working on understanding the relationship between migratory birds such as Piping Plover (*Charadrius melodus*), Wilson's Plover (*Charadrius wilsonia*), Red Knots (*Calidris canutus*), Prothonotary Warblers (*Protonotaria citrea*), and Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) and wetland restoration. This year we began the process of evaluating years of data to identify trends with the hopes of providing much needed information about how ecosystem restoration efforts might be affecting these indicator species.

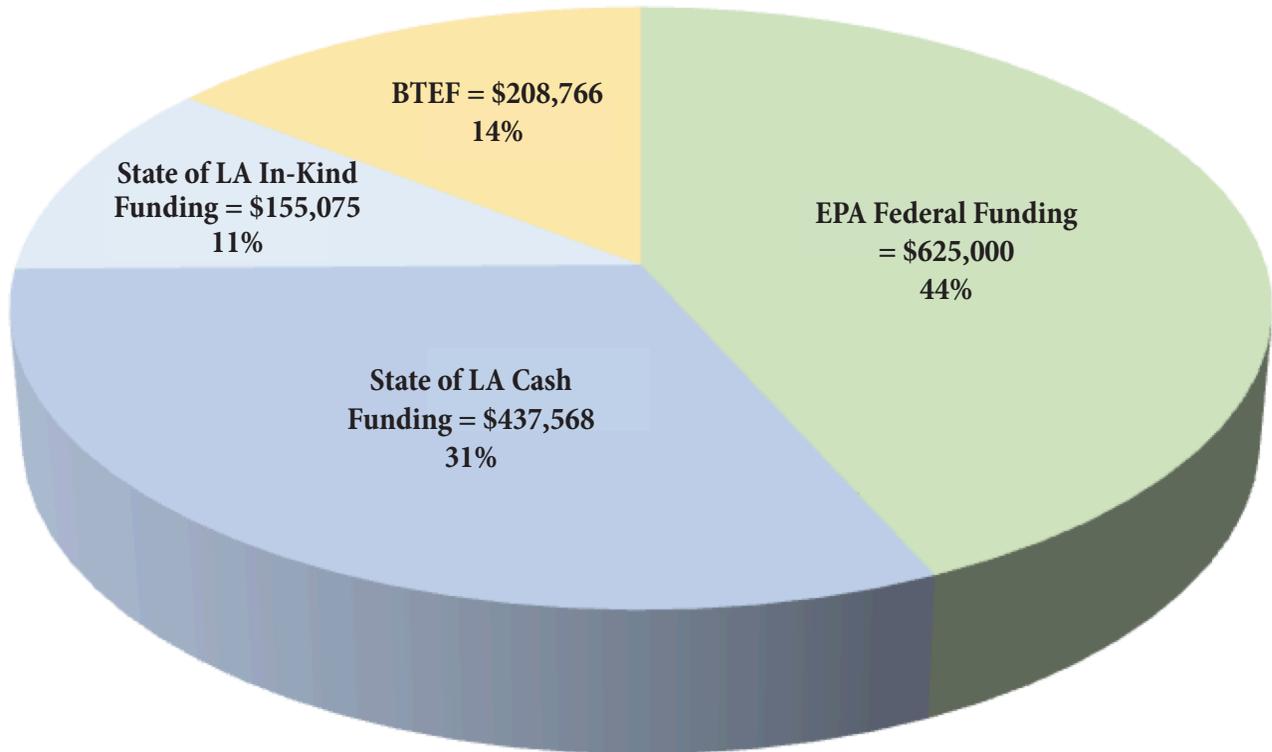


Apache Oil Company funds Osprey Nest Platform Project to protect these birds of prey.

BTNEP *Finances and Outreach*



2018 BTNEP *Funding Sources*



EPA - Environmental Protection Agency
LA - Louisiana
BTEF - Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary Foundation



Publications Help Us Reach Additional People

As always, BTNEP continues to support the public's ongoing interest in the estuary through publications. Be sure to check out our Residents' Guide to Managing Invasive Plants and our Residents' Guide to Improving Water Quality on the BTNEP website.

And if you haven't picked up your fish sticker or BTNEP calendar, please stop by the office!

BTNEP 2018/2019 FISHING RULER AND GUIDE

This is not a comprehensive or official copy of the Louisiana laws in effect and should not be utilized as such. Size and catch limit regulations are presented for selected species only. Those species, as well as other species, may be managed by season, species and permits. Different regulations for bass, catfish and crappie may apply within specific areas. Contact the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) for specific regulation information.

Fishing regulations are designed to conserve and promote fish populations. Size limits protect spawning fish and daily limits protect population size. If you fish, it is important to know and follow regulations.

* For Red Drum, Whitefish and Striped Bass, the minimum length is 10 inches and the maximum length is 24 inches. For Yellow Bass, the minimum length is 10 inches and the maximum length is 24 inches. For Channel Catfish, the minimum length is 10 inches and the maximum length is 24 inches. For Flathead Catfish, the minimum length is 10 inches and the maximum length is 24 inches.

† There are specific regulations for Red Snappers and Shark. Contact the LDWF for more information.

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The development of this product was in partnership with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

FRESHWATER SPECIES	SIZE LIMIT	DAILY LIMIT	SALTWATER SPECIES	SIZE LIMIT	DAILY LIMIT
Largemouth and Spotted Bass (Fishes River located in Pointe Coupee Parish)	None	10	Speckled Trout*	12" Minimum (TL)	25
Crappie (Sac-a-lait)	None	50	(Cameron & Calcasieu Parish)	12" Minimum (TL), two over 25"	15
Striped or Hybrid Striped Bass	None: 2 over 30" (TL)	5 (Any combination)	Red Fish**	16" Minimum (TL), one over 27"	5
White Bass	None	50	Black Drum	16" Minimum (TL), one over 27"	5
Yellow Bass	None	50	Southern Flounder	None	10
Channel Catfish	None	50	Amberjack	State & Federal Reg. 30" Min. (FL)	1
Blue Catfish	25 less than 12" (TL)	100	Cobia (Long or Lemon Fish)	State & Federal Reg. 30" Min. (FL)	2
Flathead Catfish (Spotted, Yellow or Optubous)	25 less than 14" (TL)	100	King Mackerel	State & Federal Reg. 24" Min. (FL)	2
Freshwater Drum (Garoupaou)	12" Minimum (TL)	25	Spanish Mackerel	State & Federal Reg. 12" Min. (FL)	15
			Red Snapper**	State & Federal Reg. 16" Min. (TL)	2

† Additional minimum species.

BTNEP
BARATARIA-TERRIBONNE NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM

www.BTNEP.org

Photo: Louisiana Seafood Trust

Many thanks to all of you who make our estuary so wonderful!



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