Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program

Management Conference Meeting #91 Roll Call

Century Room under Stadium

9:30 a.m. – Thursday, May 7, 2020 (Final Minutes)

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| ***BTNEP Staff*** | | | | | | | | |
| X  X  X X X X | Alma Robichaux  Andrew Barron  Dean Blanchard  Delaina LeBlanc  Matt Benoit  Natalie Waters | X  X X | Nicole Babin  Richard DeMay  Seth Moncrief  Siva Nunna | | | X | Steve Mathies, Director Emeritus  Kerry St. Pé, Director Emeritus Susan Testroet-Bergeron | |
| ***Management Conference Member*** | | | | ***Member*** | | | ***Alternate*** | |
| American Sugarcane League | | | |  | Herman Waguespack | |  | John Constant |
| Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District | | | |  | Hugh Caffery | |  | Benjamin Malbrough |
| Cajun Music Preservation Society | | | | X | Quenton Fontenot | |  |  |
| Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana | | | |  | Kimberly Reyher  Emily Vuxton | |  | Deb Abibou |
| Coastal Conservation Association of LA | | | |  | John Walther | |  |  |
| Coastal Protection Restoration Authority (CPRA) | | | |  | Bren Hasse  Greg Grandy  Brad Miller | | X  X | Darrin Lee  Kellyn LaCour  Alexis Rixner  Darin Lee  Elizabeth Shoenfelt  Robert Routon  Honora Buras  Joseph “Wes” LeBlanc  Michael Ellis |
| Commercial Fisheries | | | |  | John Tesvich | |  | Peter Vujnovicch  Clint Guidry |
| Greater Lafourche Parish Port Commission | | | |  | Chett Chaisson | |  | Davie Breaux |
| Iberville Parish Government | | | |  | John Clark | |  |  |
| Jefferson Parish Government | | | |  | Lauren Averill | | X | Seamus Riley |
| LA Association of Conservation District | | | |  | Ruben Dauzat | |  | Brad Spicer  Jerome Cantrelle |
| LA Association of Levee Boards | | | |  | Dwayne Bourgeois | |  |  |
| LA Department of Agriculture & Forestry | | | |  | Joey Breaux | |  | Faran Dietz  Jeremy Rodriguez |
| LA Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism | | | |  | Debra Credeur | |  | Karen Leathem  Linda Smith |
| LA Department of Economic Development | | | |  | Paul Sawyer | |  | Anne Perry |
| LA Department of Education | | | |  | Jill Cowart  Lydia Hill | | X | Venise Ortego  Thomas Gresham |
| LA Department of Environmental Quality | | | |  | Aimee Preau  Crisalda Adams | | X | John Sheehan  Jonathan McFarland  John Jennings |
| LA Department of Health and Hospitals | | | | X | Lauren Comeaux  Chance Wooton | |  | Lauren Comeaux |
| LA Department of Natural Resources | | | | X | Charles Reulet  Sara Krupa | | X | Craig LeBlanc  Robert Williamson  Mark Hogan |
| ***Management Conference Member*** | | | |  | ***Member*** | |  | ***Alternate*** |
| LA Department of Wildlife and Fisheries | | | | X | Willie Cheramie  Jeff Marx  Gage Lasseigne | |  | Brady Carter  Mark Schexnayder  Chris Schieble |
| LA Forestry Association | | | |  |  | |  |  |
| LA Governor’s Office of Coastal Activities | | | |  | Chip Kline | |  | Morgan Crutcher  Charles Suteliff |
| LA Independent Oil & Gas Association | | | |  | Randy Robichaux | |  |  |
| LA Landowners Association | | | | X | Tim Allen | |  | Randy Moertle |
| LA Mid Continent Oil & Gas Association | | | |  | Lori LeBlanc | |  | Ed Landgraf  Melissa Cloutet |
| LA Oil Spill Coordinators Office | | | | X | Marty J. Chabert  Jennifer Beall | | X  X | Eva Windhoffer  Karolien Debusschere  Ed Landgraf |
| LA Science Teachers’ Association | | | |  | Shannon Lafont | | X | Tera LaPrarie  Nathan Cotten  Nicole Cotten  Jean May-Brett  Natalie Lirette |
| LA Wildlife Federation | | | | X | B.J. Barney Callahan | |  | Rebecca Triche |
| Lafourche Parish Government | | | |  | Archie Chaisson | |  | Amanda Voisin |
| LSU Ag Center & LA Sea Grant | | | |  | Rex Caffey | | X | Julie Falgout  Dianne Lindstedt  Emily Maung-Douglass  Thomas Hymel  Nicole Lundberg |
| Lowlander Center | | | | X | Kristina Peterson | |  | Dr. Shirley Laska |
| LUMCON | | | | X | Dr. Craig McClain  John Conover | | X | Heidi Boudreaux  Murt Conover  Amber Bonvillain (IT Dept) |
| US NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) | | | |  | Craig Gothreaux  Richard Hartman | |  | Mel Landry  Alexis Rixner  Shannon Martin |
| Nicholls State University | | | | X  X | Dr. Jay Clune  Monique Crochet  Dr. John Doucet  Dr. Mary “Mitzi” Jackson | | X | Chris Bonvillain  Gary LaFleur  Jenny Schexnayder |
| Plaquemines Parish Government | | | |  | Vincent Frelich  Robert Spears | |  | Scott Rousselle  Krista Clark  John Helmers |
| Point Coupee Parish Government | | | |  | J.A. Rummler | |  |  |
| South Central Planning and Development Commission | | | |  | Kevin Belanger  Martha Cazaubon | | X | Pat Gordon  Stephanie Brunning  Lesley Long |
| South Louisiana Economic Council (SLEC) | | | |  | Vic Lafont | |  | Simone Maloz  Victoria Sagrera |
| South Louisiana Wetlands Discovery Center | | | |  | Jonathan Foret | |  | Angelle Percle  Samantha Hicks |
| St. Charles Parish | | | |  | Earl Matherne | |  | Kim Marousek |
| St. John Parish | | | |  | Evelyn Campo | | X | Ivy Mathieu |
| Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government | | | | X | Mart Black | |  | Jennifer Gerbasi |
| ***Management Conference Member*** | | | |  | ***Member*** | |  | ***Alternate*** |
| The Nature Conservancy | | | | X | Jean Landry | |  | Nicole Love  Karen Gautreaux |
| U.S. National Park Service | | | | X | Angela Rathle | |  | Allyn Rodriguez  Mark Ford  Julie Whitbeck  Dusty Pate  Aleutia Scott  Lea Scott |
| US Coast Guard | | | |  | Capt. Blake Welborn | |  | Brian Black |
| US Army Corps of Engineers | | | |  | Sarah Bradley | | X | Kaitlyn Carriere  Danielle Keller  Amy Dixon  Brad Inman |
| US Environmental Protection Agency | | | |  | Doug Jacobson | |  | Rachel Houge |
| US Fish & Wildlife Service | | | |  | Ronnie Paille  William Vermillion  Brigette Firmin | |  | John Savell  Jeff Weller  Brad Rieck  Bryan Pember |
| US Department of Agriculture’s – Natural Resource Conservation Service (USDA/NRCS) | | | |  | Quin Kinler  John Boatman  Arnelis Crespo | | X  X | Alton James  Samuel Terry  Lacy Bellanger  Joshua Anderson |
| US Geological Survey (USGS) | | | | X | Scott Wilson | | X | Cole Ruckstubl  Kate Spear  Melissa Collin  Phil Turnipseed  Sinead Borchert  Kathy Ladner  Jennifer Guidry  Kacie Wright |
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| ***Guest Organization*** | | | |  | ***Guest*** | |  | ***Guest*** |
| Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary Foundation | | | | X | Gary LaFleur  Earl Melancon  Laynie Barrilleaux | | X | Nolan Falgout, III  Matt Sevier |
| Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program | | | | X | Kaitlyn Tabor | |  |  |
| Bayou Country Children’s Museum | | | |  | Christopher Gergeni | |  | Christy Naquin |
| Bayou Grace | | | |  | Mary Gueniot Biegler | |  | Jenny Dupre  Anne Parr |
| Bayou Land RC & D | | | |  | Dr. Colleen Butler | |  | Jennifer Roberts |
| Bayou Some Fun | | | |  | Dottie Hartman | |  |  |
| Bio Info Experts | | | |  | Susanna Lamer | |  |  |
| Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) | | | |  | Bruce Baird | | X  X | Victoria Phaneuf  Kate Segarra |
| City of Thibodaux | | | |  | Archie Chaisson | |  |  |
| Conoco Phillips | | | |  | Ashley Golmon | |  |  |
| CRIA | | | |  | Chris Adams | |  |  |
| Daily Comet / Houma Courier | | | |  | Halle Parker | |  | Bridgete Mire  Abby Tabor |
| Ducks Unlimited | | | |  | Leslie Suazo | |  | Joe Fifer |
| Farm Bureau Insurance | | | |  | Robert Adams | |  |  |
| Governor’s Office of Coastal Activities | | | |  | Morgan Crutcher | |  |  |
| Grand Isle Port Commission | | | |  | Wayne Keller | |  |  |
| Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council | | | |  | John Ettinger | |  | LaKeshia Robertson |
| Isle de Jean Charles Band of Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw | | | |  | Chief Albert P. Naquin | |  |  |
| Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation | | | |  | Adam Songy | |  |  |
| Lori LeBlanc LLC | | | |  | Tyler Gray | |  | Katie DeRoche |
| Louisiana Appleseed | | | |  | Stephanie Beaugh | |  | Christy Kane |
| LSU | | | |  | Dr. Benjamin Springgate  Loren Hull  Nancy Rabalais | |  | Jennifer Sato  R Eugene Turner  Ashley Everette |
| Moffatt & Nichol | | | |  | Jonathan Hird | |  |  |
| Nicholls State University | | | |  | Alex Arceneaux | |  | Allyse Ferrara  Keri Turner |
| Office of Congressman Garret Graves | | | | X | David Cavell | |  |  |
| Pan Am Communication | | | |  | Lenny Delbert | |  | Lenny Delbert Jr. |
| Pointe Au Chien | | | |  | Donald Daedar | |  |  |
| Port of Morgan City | | | |  | Cindy Cutrera | |  |  |
| Public Schools | | | |  | Tina Galler | |  |  |
| RES | | | |  | Frank Cuccio | |  |  |
| Restore or Retreat | | | |  | Simone Maloz | |  | Victoria Segrera |
| Royal Engineering | | | |  | Shelley Sparks | |  | Kirk Rhinehart |
| Ryan Productions | | | |  | Andre’ Lyons | |  |  |
| Senator John Kennedy’s Office | | | |  | Mary Elise Schlesinger | |  |  |
| Shell Oil Company | | | |  | Ian Voparil | |  | Shelley Piehet  Leonard Garrison |
| Southern University | | | |  | Veronica Manrique | |  |  |
| ***Guest Organization*** | | | |  | ***Guest*** | |  | ***Guest*** |
| Spahr’s Seafood Restaurant | | | |  | Donald Spahr | |  | Brent Roger |
| TLCD | | | |  | Angela Rains | |  | Darin Guidry |
| The Water Institute of the Gulf | | | |  | Scott Hemmerling  Jessi Parfait  Erin White  Huy Ju | |  | Monica Barra  Bruce Yuill  Christine DeMeyers |
| UNO – CHART (Center for Hazards Assessment, Response & Technology) | | | |  | Melanie Sand | |  | Katherine Norwood  Bennett Alldredge |
| UNO – Nekton Research Laboratory | | | |  | Martin O’Connell | |  |  |
| US Geological Survey (USGS) | | | |  | Jacoby Carter | |  |  |
| University of Arizona | | | |  | Ben McMahan | |  |  |
| VISTA | | | |  | Katie DeHart | |  |  |
| White Car Marketing | | | |  | Cody Blanchard | | X | Emily Knobloch |
| WYES TV | | | |  | Marcia Kavanaugh | |  |  |
|  | | | |  | Vincent Guillory | |  |  |
|  | | | |  | Marty Bourgeois | |  |  |
|  | | | |  | David Gisclair | |  |  |
|  | | | | X | Gary Salathe | |  |  |
|  | | | | X | Maida Owens | |  |  |
|  | | | | X | Capt. Jake Stahl | |  |  |
|  | | | | X | Lan Tivet | |  |  |
|  | | | | X | Luke Sanchez Shaw | |  |  |
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**Final Minutes from Management Conference Meeting #90 Final Minutes – February 6, 2020**

1. Meeting was called to order by Dr. Quenton Fontenot, BTNEP MC Chairman, at 9:30am.
2. Management Conference members and guests were welcomed and asked to introduce themselves by stating their name and affiliation. Nicole Babin also took role by sign in.
3. The floor was opened for comments on the reading and approval of the minutes from the meeting.
   1. Quenton Fontenot asked if there was a motion to accept minutes as written and dispense with the reading of the minutes.
   2. Kristina Peterson motioned to accept as written. Tim Allen seconded the motion.
   3. Motion was approved by consensus.
4. **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

Quenton Fontenot starts off with personnel changes. He mentioned that Susan Testroet-Bergeron has retired and Dean Blanchard is the Interim Director. A search for a new director is underway and was posted on January 27th, 2020 and will be posted for 60 days. We’re looking to close it around March 27th-28th, 2020. The search committee has been formed and Quenton listed all of the names and who they’re representing. Quenton then also mentioned how the process of hiring works and how it’s going. He then took questions about the search for the new Director.

Dean Blanchard mentioned how Andrew Barron and Siva Nunna are all-in with the water quality sampling in Bayou Folse and Bayou Lafourche. They’ve also been doing the Homeowner Sewage Assistance Program. He spoke about Seth Moncrief and Matt Benoit’s two volunteer groups from the University of Missouri and the University of Buffalo that each came for about 4-5 days and worked at the farm with the plants as well as an invasive species removal on Grand Isle. They also went on a canoe trip to educate them about the Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary. He mentioned that Natalie Waters has been working on Chimney Swift towers and plans on doing 5 boxes. She’s also preparing to make pollinator gardens. Dean then spoke about Alma Robichaux and how she’s still doing marine debris removal on Elmer’s Island every month. Delaina LeBlanc had a successful Red Knot survey on the Chandeleur Islands. Delaina then spoke about Red Knots and her findings from her surveys. Andrew then spoke about the Bayou Folse and Bayou Lafourche water sampling as well as the homeowner sewage assistance program. They also mentioned how they’re always open to volunteers to help with water sampling. Dean then mentioned that the reauthorization of National Estuary Programs was voted on. The results are still pending.

1. **UPCOMING DATES**
   1. BTNEP Management Conference – May 7th, 2020
   2. Bayou Lafourche Cleanup – March 21st, 2020
   3. Paddle Bayou Lafourche – April 2nd-4th, 2020
   4. Grand Isle Migratory Bird Festival – April, 2020
2. **DISCUSSION ITEMS**
3. “Restoration Opportunities for the Louisiana Iris” – Gary Salathe, The Greater New Orleans Iris Society

Gary Salathe introduced himself and mentioned how he’s with the Greater New Orleans Iris Society. There are 5 Louisiana iris species and 4 out of the 5 grow wild. There are the *I. nelsonii*, *I. giganticaerulea*, *I. brevicaulis*, *I. hexagona*, and *I. fulva*. About 100 years ago people started digging these irises from the swamp and planting them in their garden and they would eventually cross-pollinate. This extended the variation in colors of these irises. There are several portions of the group where they’re interested in cultivar, species, preservation, and restoration. Gary mentioned that he’s in charge of the restoration of species. Primarily, they deal with the I. giganticaerulea and the I. fulva which are almost exclusively found in the swamps. He also mentioned that when you go back in time there were Louisiana irises everywhere and one issue was that they used to clog up drains. He then showed a map of the iris distribution in Louisiana. The reasons why the Louisiana irises in the wild have been in decline is development, herbicides, and salt water intrusion. Gary then talked about how herbicides are being used regularly everywhere. What the herbicides have done is almost remove the Louisiana iris from view. The big issue is saltwater intrusion. What started their interest in doing restoration was Mardi Gras Pass. He then showed images of Mardi Gras Pass and explained the trouble areas. Gary then also explained how in the Wax Lake Outlet delta, land is constantly building back up. The salinity in Lake Ponchartrain has also gone down where it’s mostly brackish water. There was an iris restoration project at the Big Branch refuge marsh with the US Fish and Wildlife Service has become freshwater where it was previously brackish. Gary then mentioned that there’s a mitigation property that they’ve been contacting with. He also mentioned that he and his group wants to believe that somewhere someone is studying our area but the reality is that it’s the citizen involvement. Gary then spoke about the things they could do about irises. One solution is to plant irises where the public can see them such as boardwalks. They can also enhance the number of species of irises at the boardwalks as well as marketing the boardwalks during the bloom to increase attendance. He then showed some of the boardwalks that they’ve brought irises to. Another thing that Gary and his group can do is have more irises in production so that they can be used in marsh restoration projects. He then talked about the iris donations and volunteers they’ve had. They then ‘parked’ irises where they leave the irises and let them grow on their own. That lead to the partnership with Nicholls State University and Gary explained this partnership. Gary mentioned how they would like to find groups in the area and locations to grow and park irises where it’s accessible to the public. They could also use help with funding and are looking for volunteer groups. Gary then took questions.

1. “Sustaining Culture in the Face of Land Loss” – Maida Owens, Louisiana Folklife Program

Maida Owens introduced herself and mentioned that she’s with the Louisiana Folklife Program and will be talking about the cultural issues involved in the land loss that’s happening in South Louisiana. Maida then explained the Folklife Program and its website. The mission is to identify, document, preserve, and present the folk traditions of Louisiana. Most of the previous projects have been research and place based throughout Louisiana. For example, one was on immigrants and the immigrant community. Maida then showed a map of the cultures in Louisiana. The Folklife Program is under Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser’s office with the department of culture, recreation, and tourism. Specifically, the office of cultural development under the division of arts. Maida then explained the Bayou Culture Collaborative, how it came to be, and how it has changed over time. They have also offered several different workshops. The Louisiana Folklife Program partnered up with the Louisiana Folklore Society and Maida was able to broaden the geographic range to all 9 coastal parishes. She then named where the funding for the program comes from. The current strategy is passing on traditions with workshops where they help a tradition-bearer pass on a tradition to several generations. The second strategy is the sense of place and loss workshop where they bring together the cultural community and the science community to learn from one another. This is to raise awareness of the cultural and coastal issues in Louisiana. Culture is passed on through gatherings and education, both informally and formally. Maida then further explained the cultures and immigrants and what they do when it comes to traditions. Maida then gave some examples of different cultures and what traditions those cultures have. Many of these immigrants adjust their traditions to become parallel to some of the traditions in South Louisiana. Food gatherings are opportunities for culture to be passed on, especially if they’re intergenerational. Music and music venues are also important. Many different strategies are possible such as small festivals where there are storytelling stages, craft and food demonstrations. Another more sophisticated strategy is Folklife Center where they can hold classes and workshops that can be culture specific or multicultural. Lastly, another strategy is by having in-school activities. Maida then showed images of people storytelling and demonstrating. What Maida is trying to do is inform the arts and cultural communities because there’s a disconnect between the two. The two ways you could help is by supporting the cultures of coastal communities and preparing the receiver communities. What Maida and her organization can do is offer a grant program that can build capacity community groups. Maida then gives a few examples of these community groups. A need assessment of cultural groups can help reconnect them with each other as well as planning grants for receiver communities can help. A different thing Maida and her organization can help is by offering artist grants to engage communities, increase awareness of issues, and encourage creative solutions through art. Several programs have already talked about creating opportunity zones for receiver communities to incentivize growth and preparation. Helping people realize that population migration isn’t just a coastal issue but a statewide issue is also necessary. Maida then mentioned that the next workshop on facing change through Folklife, science, and the arts will be March 25, 2020. Another meeting opportunity will be for the Louisiana Folklore Society on March 27-28, 2020. Maida then thanks the guests and takes questions.

1. “Grand Isle State Park Chinese Tallow Removal and Restoration Project” – David Baker, Baker Botanical Consulting, LLC

David Baker introduced himself. He started off by mentioning that in 2017 he began cutting Chinese tallow in Grand Isle State Park. David then showed a picture of how he subdivided Grand Isle State Park. Each unit has its own individual issues yet the same problems. In a place where hurricanes hit, the sand is pushed into the habitats which creates a good environment for Chinese tallow to grow. David then explained how many tallow he found in each of the sections he created of the park with images and maps. Pictures were taken in certain areas of the park and were taken once a week, every month for 24 months to keep track of how each section changed over time. Grand Isle State Park is continuously germinating Chinese tallow by cutting it back in order to get to the telephone poles. David then showed images of the sections and how many Chinese tallow were in each area, including tallow by the telephone poles. David also explained how he cut the tallow down and then marked it to see the rate of removal. He also counted the rings of the trees and measured the diameter. He mentioned that there are about 30 million seeds being deposited every year in Grand Isle State Park. He then showed images of sights with Chinese tallow before and after they were removed. He also explained many of the other plants present both native and invasive. Many of the images shown were of the areas over time. About 90% of the Chinese tallow on Grand Isle State Park have been removed and the re-sprout rate was low at less than 3%. David also went back and cut over 400 stems that have re-sprouted. The seed bank is still in the millions. It has been suggested by David that fire be used to control the Chinese tallow. He then took questions.

1. **NEW BUSINESS** 
   1. No new business.
2. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**
   1. Dr. Gary LaFleur mentioned that a new director might be chosen around the time of the next BTNEP Management Conference meeting.
   2. Dean Blanchard mentioned that the CCMP is being worked on. Also, the next Management Conference will be for work plans.
   3. Ed Landgraf then spoke about the work plan on oil spill prevention and that the PSAs reached about 1 million people. He then offered a training for anyone who was interested.
   4. Barney Callahan spoke about how the Louisiana Wildlife Federation is taking nominations for their conservation achievements award.
   5. Andrew Barron recognized the partners that they’re working with in the Bayou Folse Watershed which is the Natural Resources Conservation Service.
   6. Kristina Peterson made the motion to have Susan Testroet-Bergeron changed to the Director Emerita. She also motioned that she be nominated for the award from LWF.
   7. Dr. John Doucet seconded the motion.
   8. The motion was approved by consensus.
   9. Willie Cheramie mentioned a meeting about speckled sea trout.
   10. Quenton Fontenot that the director search and job description is on the BTNEP website and gives more information about the job search and qualifications.
3. **ADJOURNED**
   1. Dr. Quenton Fontenot, MC Chairman, asked if there was a motion to adjourn.
   2. A motion was made by Angela Rathle.
   3. Seconded by Nicole Lundberg.
   4. Motion was approved by consensus. The meeting was adjourned.