Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program

Management Conference Meeting #96 Roll Call

Virtual Meeting

9:30 a.m. – Thursday, August 5, 2021

Final Minutes #96

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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  X  X | Nicole Babin  Seth Moncrief  Siva Nunna  T. Bradley Keith  Kaitlyn Tabor | | | X | Steve Mathies, Director Emeritus  Kerry St. Pé, Director Emeritus  Susan Testroet-Bergeron Director Emerita | |
| ***Management Conference Member*** | | | | ***Member*** | | | ***Alternate*** | |
| American Sugarcane League | | | |  | Herman Waguespack | |  | Atticus Finger |
| Atchafalaya National Heritage Area/CRT | | | | X | Justin Lemoine | |  |  |
| Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District | | | |  | Hugh Caffery | | X | Benjamin Malbrough |
| Cajun Music Preservation Society | | | | X | Quenton Fontenot | |  | Misty McElroy  Gary LaFleur  Allyse Ferrara |
| 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 | | X | Greg Grandy  Brian Lezina |
| Commercial Fisheries | | | |  | John Tesvich | |  | Peter Vujnovicch  Clint Guidry |
| Greater Lafourche Parish Port Commission | | | |  | Davie Breaux | |  | Thad Angelloz |
| Iberville Parish Government | | | |  | John Clark | |  |  |
| Jefferson Parish Government | | | |  | Michelle Gonzales | |  | Jason Smith |
| 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 (CRT) | | | | X | Debra Credeur  Maida Owens | |  | Karen Leathem  Linda Smith |
| LA Department of Economic Development | | | | X | Paul Sawyer | |  | Anne Perry |
| LA Department of Education | | | | X  X | Tana Lutcher  Michelle Lewis | |  | Breigh Rhodes  Nathan Corley |
| LA Department of Environmental Quality | | | |  | Aimee Preau | |  | John Sheehan  Crisalda Adams |
| LA Department of Health and Hospitals | | | | X | Lauren Comeaux | | X | Chasity Cheramie |
| LA Department of Natural Resources (LDNR) | | | | X | Charles Reulet | |  | Sara Krupa  Robert Williamson  Mark Hogan |
| LA Department of Wildlife and Fisheries | | | | X | Willie Cheramie | |  | Dylan Landry  Andrew Cumberland  Jonathan Wiebe |
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| ***Management Conference Member*** | | | |  | ***Member*** | |  | ***Alternate*** |
| LA Forestry Association | | | |  |  | |  |  |
| LA Governor’s Office of Coastal Activities | | | |  | Chip Kline | |  | Morgan Crutcher |
| LA Independent Oil & Gas Association | | | |  | Randy Robichaux | |  |  |
| LA Landowners Association | | | | X | Tim Allen | | X | Russell Walters  Kacey Peterson |
| LA Mid Continent Oil & Gas Association | | | |  | Lori LeBlanc | |  | Ed Landgraf  Melissa Cloutet |
| LA Oil Spill Coordinators Office | | | |  | Karolien Debusschere | | X | Jennifer Beall  (225)-614-1528 |
| LA Science Teachers’ Association | | | | X | Nicole Cotten | |  | Nathan Cotten  Jean May-Brett |
| LA Wildlife Federation | | | | X | B.J. Barney Callahan | |  | Rebecca Triche |
| Lafourche Parish Government | | | |  | Archie Chaisson | | X | Amanda Voisin  Mitch Orgeron |
| LSU Ag Center & LA Sea Grant | | | |  | Rex Caffey | | X | Julie Falgout  Emily Maung-Douglass  Thomas Hymel  Nicole Lundberg |
| Lowlander Center | | | |  | Kristina Peterson | | X | Dr. Shirley Laska |
| LUMCON | | | |  | Dr. Craig McClain | | X | John Conover |
| US NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) | | | | X | Alexis Rixner | |  | Craig Gothreaux |
| Nicholls State University | | | | X | Dr. Jay Clune  Dr. John Doucet  Jenny Schexnayder | | X | Chris Bonvillain  Gary LaFleur  Kevin Pitts |
| Plaquemines Parish Government | | | |  | John Helmers | |  | Robert Spears |
| Pointe Coupee Parish Government | | | | X | Rosemary Rummler | |  |  |
| South Central Planning and Development Commission | | | |  | Kevin Belanger  Pat Gordon | |  | Tim Bourcier  Adam Lefort |
| South Louisiana Economic Council (SLEC) | | | |  | Vic Lafont | |  | Simone Maloz  Victoria Sagrera |
| South Louisiana Wetlands Discovery Center | | | | X | Jonathan Foret | | X  X | Samantha Hicks  Angelle Percle  Sarah Fontana |
| St. Charles Parish | | | |  | Earl Matherne | |  | Kim Marousek |
| St. John Parish | | | | X | Tara Lambeth | |  | Rene Pastorek |
| Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government | | | | X | Mart Black | |  | Jennifer Gerbasi |
| The Nature Conservancy | | | | X | Jean Landry | |  | Karen Gautreaux |
| U.S. National Park Service | | | |  | Angela Rathle  Allyn Rodriguez | |  | Mark Ford  Julie Whitbeck  Dusty Pate |
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| ***Management Conference Member*** | | | |  | ***Member*** | |  | ***Alternate*** |
| US Coast Guard | | | |  | Brian Black | |  | LCDR Anthony Romero |
| US Army Corps of Engineers | | | | X | Sarah Bradley  Alice Kerl | |  | Kaitlyn Carriere  Danielle Keller  Amy Dixon |
| US Environmental Protection Agency | | | | X | Lisa Rickards | |  | Doug Jacobson |
| US Fish & Wildlife Service | | | |  | Karen Soileau | |  | Ronny Paille |
| US Department of Agriculture’s – Natural Resource Conservation Service (USDA/NRCS) | | | |  | Josh Anderson | | X | John Boatman  Alton James  Quin Kinler |
| US Geological Survey (USGS) – CWPPRA | | | | X | Lauren Leonpacher | | X | 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 |
| 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 | |  | Victoria Phaneuf |
| City of Thibodaux | | | |  |  | |  |  |
| Coastal and Marine Operators | | | | X | Capt. Jake Stahl | |  |  |
| Conoco Phillips | | | |  | Ashley Golmon | |  |  |
| CRIA | | | |  | Chris Adams | |  |  |
| Daily Comet / Houma Courier | | | |  | Bridgete Mire | |  | Abby Tabor |
| Ducks Unlimited | | | | X | Leslie Suazo | |  | Joe Fifer |
| Farm Bureau Insurance | | | |  | Robert Adams | |  |  |
| Governor’s Office of Coastal Activities | | | |  | Chip Kline | |  | Morgan Crutcher |
| Grand Isle Port Commission | | | | X | Weldon Danos | |  |  |
| Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council | | | |  | John Ettinger | |  | LaKeshia Robertson |
| Isle de Jean Charles Band of Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw | | | |  | Chief Albert P. Naquin | |  | Deme M. Naquin Jr. |
| Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation | | | |  | Adam Songy | |  |  |
| Lori LeBlanc LLC | | | |  | Tyler Gray | |  | Katie DeRoche |
| Louisiana Appleseed | | | |  | Adrienne Wheeler | |  | Gerren Sias |
| Louisiana Hypoxia Working Group | | | | X | Doug Daigle | |  |  |
| LSU | | | |  | Dr. Benjamin Springgate  Loren Hull  Nancy Rabalais | | X | Jennifer Sato  R Eugene Turner  Ashley Everette |
| Moffatt & Nichol | | | |  | Jonathan Hird | |  |  |
| Nicholls State University | | | | X | Monique Crochet  Shana Walton | |  | Allyse Ferrara  Keri Turner |
| Office of Congressman Garret Graves | | | | X | Cong. Garret Graves  David Cavell | |  | Taylor Playforth  Alexandra Erwin |
| Pan Am Communication | | | |  | Lenny Delbert | |  | Lenny Delbert Jr. |
| Pointe Au Chien | | | |  | Donald Daedar | |  |  |
| Port of Morgan City | | | | X | Cindy Cutrera | |  |  |
| Public Schools | | | |  | Tina Galler | |  |  |
| RES | | | |  | Frank Cuccio | |  |  |
| Restore or Retreat | | | | X | Simone Maloz | | X | Victoria Segrera Bourque |
| Royal Engineering | | | |  | Shelley Sparks | |  | Kirk Rhinehart |
| Ryan Productions | | | |  | Andre’ Lyons | |  |  |
| Senator John Kennedy’s Office | | | |  | Mary Elise Schlesinger | |  |  |
| Shell Oil Company | | | |  | Joni Tuck | |  | Donnie Garrison |
|  | | | |  |  | |  |  |
| ***Guest Organization*** | | | |  | ***Guest*** | |  | ***Guest*** |
| Southern University | | | |  | Veronica Manrique | |  |  |
| 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  Amy Wold |
| 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 | |  |  |
| Weather CSI | | | |  | Dr. Pat Fitzpatrick | |  |  |
| White Car Marketing | | | |  | Cody Blanchard | |  | Emily Knobloch |
| WYES TV | | | |  | Marcia Kavanaugh | |  |  |
|  | | | |  | Vincent Guillory | |  |  |
|  | | | |  | Marty Bourgeois | |  |  |
|  | | | |  | Darryl Hambrinck | |  |  |
|  | | | | X | David Gisclair | |  |  |
| Coastal Technical Assistance Center (CTAC) | | | | X | Laci Melancon | |  |  |
|  | | | |  |  | |  |  |
|  | | | | X | Moby Solangi | |  |  |
|  | | | | X | Caroline Wendt | |  |  |
|  | | | | X | William Hano | |  |  |
|  | | | | X | Taylor Marshall | |  |  |
|  | | | | X | Greg Linscombe | |  |  |
|  | | | | X | Marc Wyatt | |  |  |
|  | | | | X | Alyce Theriot | |  |  |
|  | | | | X | Caroline Byrne | |  |  |
|  | | | | X | David Illgen | |  |  |
|  | | | | X | Honora Buras | |  |  |
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**Final Minutes from Management Conference Meeting #96 Final Minutes – August 5, 2021**

1. Meeting was called to order by Dr. Quenton Fontenot, BTNEP MC Chairman, at 9:30am.
2. Management Conference members and guests were asked by Nicole Babin to register with their name and affiliation.
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 the minutes as written and dispense with the reading.
   2. Mart Black motioned to accept as written. Dr. Gary LaFleur seconded the motion.
   3. Motion was approved by consensus.

* **Director’s Report**
* T. Bradley Keith, BTNEP Director, went over the agenda for the meeting and mentioned the several presentations that were planned. T. updated the conference members that volunteer events are being pushed back due to COVID but BTNEP was still able to get a few in. T. went over his time at BTNEP from the past 6 months and what he hopes to happen in the future. He was able to get out in the field a few times including a trip to the Barrier Island and the Spanish Pass ridge. He introduces our team members, Andrew Barron, Alma Robichaux, and Matt Benoit, who will be updating their projects. T. also listed the important aspects of BTNEP which are Wildlife and Habitat Protection and Restoration, Sustainability, Native Plant Production, Education, Outreach, Policy, and Partnership. He mentioned a couple of partners we have in the area such as Nicholls and LUMCON and how he welcomes more partnerships. T. Brad then took questions.
* **Team Updates**
* Water Quality – Andrew Barron, Senior Scientist
  + Andrew Barron, Senior Research Scientist and Quality Assurance Manager, introduced himself and mentioned that he’ll provide an overview of the BTNEP Water Quality Projects. There are two fund categories for different projects. The first are 320-Funded Projects which are funded through the annual work plan. The first project is the H-2-O Teacher Workshops which provides teachers with water quality training that’ll help them reciprocate what they’ve learned to their class. This year, everything was done online. The next project is putting “No Dumping” signs around the Bayou Folse Watershed due to the amount of trash. Andrew mentioned that they’re also working on a project with the LSU Ag Center doing a Bayou Lafourche community sewage survey. The second fund category are externally-funded projects. Andrew then showed a financial map of what programs the funding is coming from. The funding goes towards the Home Sewage Assistance Programs in Bayou Folse and Bayou Lafourche as well as inspections going on in Bayou Folse. He went into further detail explaining each project. Every project mentioned has been funded either fully or partially by the US EPA. Andrew then takes questions.
* Sustainability – Alma Robichaux, Education/Outreach Coordinator
  + Alma Robichaux is working with the EPA Gulf of Mexico Program for Trash Free Waters. She received a grant for sustainable festivals that will work with the French Quarter Festivals and the Satchmo Fest. The French Quarter Festival has a website that will give more information on the sustainability efforts. Changes will be made such as having all food sold in compostable packaging, all drinks sold in recyclable materials, as well as having sorting stations. Alma showed a few example images of some of the materials that’ll be sold instead of the single use plastics. Another festival that BTNEP has contracted with is the Rougarou Fest which takes place in October. For this, instead of throwing beads for the parades, doubloons that can be redeemed at participating businesses will partially replace them. Alma’s next project is the Elmer’s Island Cleanup that’s a cooperative agreement with LDWF. BTNEP has a paid team of volunteers to go out and clean up the beach and record data. She showed and explained a few images of trash found on the beach such as bottles, straws, nurdles, and even multiple sharks. One of Alma’s future projects is to get Mardi Gras to be more sustainable by not throwing plastic beads. She then takes questions.
* Native Plant Production – Matt Benoit, Habitat Restoration Coordinator
  + Matt Benoit introduced himself and his Native Plant projects. He showed an aerial view of the plant production facility at the Nicholls Farm now and how it is planned to look in the future. Matt went over the equipment at the farm that’s used for the planting of the species being grown. He then showed several images of the plants under the shadehouse. Two of the main projects are growing about 1200 trees, specifically American beautyberry, yaupon holly, and wax myrtle, for the Bayou DeCade Ridge Restoration. The other bigger project is for Spanish Pass that will need persimmon, hackberry, live oak, red mulberry, yaupon holly, wax myrtle, and a couple others. A lot of the plants planted in March have germinated a great deal as of July. Matt then mentioned that the amount of plants needed exceeds the amount of space under the shadehouse and they’re looking to expand. Matt then thanked the student workers working at the farm because they’ve been a tremendous help getting everything done. Matt brought back up the aerial view of the farm that showed the area that will become another shadehouse that’ll double the amount of space available. They also plan on putting in culverts so that water won’t pool in certain areas and will drain to the correct ditches. A native seed source will be put adjacent to where the new shadehouse will be and will be a forest of all native trees so that it’s easier to collect seeds. There are 9 pine trees that’ll need to come down before anything can start. Matt then took questions.
* Congressman Garret Graves
  + Congressman Garret Graves started off by welcoming T. Bradley Keith to the team. He then announced that the CWPPRA funding had expired but they were able to get a temporary extension for another 5 years. Congressman Graves is working on getting the funding back up and running. Congressman Graves then moved on to ask opinions about infrastructure because everyone has different definitions of the word. He mentioned that he considers coastal restoration as infrastructure so what many of the programs present are doing is extremely important. He talked about an infrastructure bill that is possible to pass but it won’t be easy getting there. Congressman Graves emphasized the importance of the plenty of coastal restoration projects and how it helps reverse the negative impacts on our coast. He also mentioned an increase in the percentage of beneficial use of dredge materials in the south. Congressman Graves has been working closely with Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District to help improve Bayou Lafourche. One example of what they’ve done is removing the weir in Thibodaux. In the future they plan to build a new pump station in Donaldsonville to be able to push more water through Bayou Lafourche. Congressman Graves went into detail on the steps of getting the bill passed and possible issues they may run into. He then asked the conference members for feedback and questions.
* **Partner Presentations**
* Jonathan Foret - South Louisiana Wetland Discovery Center

*Restore the Earth Cypress Forest Restoration*

* + - Jonathan Foret with the South Louisiana Wetlands Discovery Center made his introduction and gave an overview of a partnering foundation, Restore the Earth. Restore the Earth’s goal is to restore 1 million acres in the Mississippi River Basin spanning from southern Illinois to the Gulf of Mexico. The project that’ll be presented will be about the 5,000 acres of cypress habitats that will be restored in Pointe-aux-Chenes. Johnathan then introduced Taylor Marshall, the Director of sustainable programs at Restore the Earth. Taylor thanked everyone and got started on giving a basic overview of Restore the Earth. They have started focusing on a landscape scale restoration in order to have a bigger impact on the landscape. With the project in Pointe-aux-Chenes, a big partner is the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. LDWF has helped with knowing what places need restoration and what critical projects are needed in those locations.Taylor then went into further details on the project in Pointe-aux-Chenes. Taylor then passed the spotlight back to Jonathan for his opinions. Jonathan spoke about how when you quantify the outcome of this project, whether environmentally or culturally, it shows a positive outcome. Taylor then showed images of the progress. Many of the trees that have been planted have thrived. She mentioned Mart Black with Terrebonne Parish who is one of their partners on this project. Mart spoke more about the project from his perspective with Terrebonne Parish. He mentions the Bayou Terrebonne freshwater diversion project and how its going to help slow saltwater diversion and put more sediment into Pointe-aux-Chenes to support the habitat. Taylor then took over and talked about the financial portion of the project. They then took questions.
* **Operations Update**
  + Dean Blanchard, Deputy Director
  + Dean mentioned that the work plan that was approved at the last management conference has been forwarded to EPA and was approved by them. He also mentioned that the appropriation bill for next year’s funding has gone through the house and increases the funding from $700,000 to $750,000. That’s all of the updates Dean had for this meeting.
* **Project Spotlight**
  + Pollinator Conservation Coordinator – Natalie Waters, Bird Conservation Coordinator
  + Natalie introduced herself and her pollinator project. In 2019, she received a grant to help pollinators, specifically the Monarch butterfly. She mentioned that they were able to give away several hundred pollinator plants in 2020 and over 500 this July at the plant giveaway at the Lowes in Thibodaux. These plants included all native species such as milkweeds and nectar species such as the spotted beebalm, purple coneflower, and several more. The next step in the project is to partner with the St. Francisville Community Vegetable Garden organization to install pollinator demonstration gardens. Natalie then took questions.
* **Other Business**
  + Andrew Barron announced that the Iowa Soil and Water Outcomes Fund proposed signing an agreement with BTNEP to start taking the same steps as the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, who already have an agreement with BTNEP. This agreement is for them to implement best management practices on confined animal feeding operations.
  + Dr. Gary LaFleur gave an update on the Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary Foundation and the possible timeline for the White Boot Gala.
* **UPCOMING DATES – Save the Date**
  + BTNEP Management Conference – November 4th, 2021
  + BTNEP Management Conference – February 3rd, 2022
  + BTNEP Management Conference – May 5th, 2022
  + BTNEP Management Conference – August 4th, 2022
  + BTNEP Management Conference – November 3rd, 2022
* **ADJOURNED**
  + Dr. Quenton Fontenot, MC Chairman, asked if there was a motion to adjourn.
  + A motion was made by Caroline Wendt. Seconded by Mart Black.
  + Motion was approved by consensus. The meeting was adjourned.