Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program

Management Conference Meeting #86 Roll Call

Plantation Suite near Student Union

9:30 a.m. – Thursday, February 7, 2019

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| ***BTNEP Staff*** | | | | | | | | |
| X  X  X  X | Alma Robichaux  Andrew Barron  Dean Blanchard  Delania LeBlanc  Matt Benoit  Michael Massimi | X  X  X | Natalie Waters  Nicole Babin  Richard DeMay  Seth Moncrief  Siva Nunna  Susan Testroet-Bergeron | | | X | Steve Mathies, Director Emeritus  Kerry St. Pé, Director Emeritus | |
| ***Management Conference Member*** | | | | ***Member*** | | | ***Alternate*** | |
| American Sugarcane League | | | |  | Herman Waguespack | |  | John Constant |
| Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District | | | |  | Hugh Caffery | |  | Benjamin Malbrough |
| Cajun Music Preservation | | | | X | Quenton Fontenot | |  |  |
| Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana | | | | X | Kimberly Reyher  Emily Vuxton | |  | Deb Abibou  Giovanna McClenachan |
| Coastal Conservation Association of LA | | | |  | John Walther | |  |  |
| Coastal Protection Restoration Authority | | | |  | Chip Kline  Stuart Brown | |  | Brad Miller  Bren Haase  Carol Parsons Richard  Daniel Dearmond  Darin Lee  Elizabeth Shoenfelt  Robert Routon  Honora Buras  Jason Lanclos  Joseph “Wes” LeBlanc  Michael Ellis  Kenneth Bahlinger  Natalie Peyronnin  Rudy Simoneaux  Thomas McLain  Jim Pahl |
| Commercial Fisheries | | | |  | John Tesvich | |  | Peter Vujnovicch  Clint Guidry |
| Greater Lafourche Parish Port Commission | | | |  | Chett Chaisson | |  | Davie Breaux  Mohan Menn |
| Iberville Parish | | | |  | John Clark | |  |  |
| Jefferson Parish | | | |  | Marnie Winter | | X  X | Jason Smith  Seamus Riley  Matt Sevier (BTEF-BM) |
| LA Association of Conservation District | | | |  | Ruben Dauzat | |  | Brad Spicer  Jerome Cantrelle |
| LA Association of Levee Boards | | | | X | Dwayne Bourgeois | |  |  |
| LA Department of Ag & Forestry | | | |  | Joey Breaux | |  | Carrie Castille  Caitlin Lambert  Faran Dietz  Jeremy Rodriguez |
| LA Dept. of Culture, Recreation and Tourism | | | |  | Debra Credeur | |  | Karen Leathem  Linda Smith |
| ***Management Conference Member*** | | | |  | ***Member*** | |  | ***Alternate*** |
| LA Dept. of Economic Development | | | |  | Paul Sawyer | |  | Anne Perry |
| LA Department of Education | | | |  | Jill Cowart | |  | Lydia Hill |
| LA Department of Environmental Quality | | | | X | Aimee Preau  Crisalda Adams | | X | John Sheehan  Jonathan McFarland  John Jennings |
| LA Department of Health and Hospitals | | | |  | Kathy LeBlanc | |  | Lauren Comeaux |
| LA Department of Natural Resources | | | | X  X  X | Charles Reulet  Chasity Cheramie  Sara Krupa  Jessica Diez  Mark Hogan | |  | Don Haydel  Sara Krupa  Robert Williamson  Tori O’Malley  Rod Pierce |
| LA Department of Wildlife and Fisheries | | | | X | Willie Cheramie  Jeff Marx  Gage Lasseigne | |  | Brady Carter  Mark Schexnayder  Chris Schieble |
| LA Forestry Association | | | |  |  | |  |  |
| LA Independent Oil & Gas Association | | | |  | Randy Robichaux | |  |  |
| LA Landowners Association | | | |  | Tim Allen | |  | Randy Moertle |
| LA Mid Continent Oil & Gas Association | | | |  | Lori LeBlanc | | X | Ed Landgraf  Melissa Cloutet |
| LA Oil Spill Coordinators Office | | | |  | Marty J. Chabert  David Gisclair | | X | Eva Windhoffer  Karolien Debusschere  Tori Copeland |
| 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  Bob Stewart | |  | Rebecca Triche  Stacy Ortego |
| Lafourche Parish | | | |  | Jimmy Cantrelle | |  | 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  Theresa Dardar | |  | Dr. Shirley Laska  Dick Krajeski |
| LUMCON | | | | X | Dr. Craig McClain  John Conover | |  | Guillaume Rieucau  Murt Conover |
| 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 | |  | Chris Bonvillain |
| Plaquemines Parish | | | | X | Vincent Frelich  Robert Spears | |  | Scott Rousselle  Krista Clark |
| Point Coupee Parish | | | |  | J.A. Rummler | |  |  |
| Sassafras LA | | | |  | Alex Naquin | |  |  |
| South Central Planning and Development Commission | | | | X | Kevin Belanger  Martha Cazaubon | |  | Pat Gordon  Stephanie Brunning |
| ***Management Conference Member*** | | | |  | ***Member*** | |  | ***Alternate*** |
| South Louisiana Economic Council (SLEC) | | | |  | Vic Lafont | | X | 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 |
| 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  Kimberly Cooke |
| US Coast Guard | | | | X | Capt. Blake Welborn  Kelsey Holford | |  | Liz Massimi |
| US Corps of Engineers | | | | X | Sarah Bradley  Susan Hennington  Scott Wandell | |  | Barbara Kleiss  Mark Wingate  Cheri Price  Kaityln Carriere  Brad Inman |
| US Environmental Protection Agency | | | |  | Doug Jacobson | |  | Rachel Houge |
| US Fish & Wildlife Service | | | |  | Ronnie Paille | |  | John Savell  Jeff Weller  Brad Rieck  Bryan Pember |
| USDA/NRCS | | | |  | Quin Kinler  John Boatman  Arnelis Crespo | | X  X | Alton James  Samuel Terry  Lacy Bellanger |
| USGS | | | |  | Scott Wilson | |  | Cole Ruckstubl  Kate Spear  Mirka Zapletal  Melissa Collin  Phil Turnipseed  Sinead Borchert  Kathy Ladner |
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| ***Guest Organization*** | | | |  | ***Guest*** | |  | ***Guest*** |
| Aqua Safety-First Community Program | | | |  | Woodrow Parker | |  | Lee Hulsey |
| Atchafalaya NHA | | | |  | Steven Fullen | |  | Justin Owens |
| Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary Foundation | | | | X | Earl Melancon  Gary LaFleur  Allayne 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 | | | | X | Dottie Hartman | |  |  |
| Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) | | | |  | Bruce Baird | |  | Victoria Phaneuf |
| Conoco Phillips | | | |  | Betsy Brien | |  |  |
| CRIA | | | |  | Chris Adams | |  |  |
| Daily Comet / Houma Courier | | | |  | Dan Boudreaux  Garrett Ohlmeyer | |  | 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 | |  |  |
| Lori LeBlanc LLC | | | |  | Tyler Gray  Katie DeRoche | |  | Melissa Cloutet |
| Louisiana Appleseed | | | |  | Stephanie Beaugh | |  | Christy Kane |
| LSU | | | |  | Dr Benjamin Springgate  Loren Hull | |  | Jennifer Sato  R Eugene Turner |
| Moffatt & Nichol | | | |  | Jonathan Hird | |  |  |
| Nicholls State University | | | |  | Alex Arceneaux  Jenny Schexnayder | |  | Allyse Ferrara  Keri Turner |
| Office of Congressman Garret Graves | | | |  | David Cavell | |  | John Lombardo |
| 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 | | | |  | Simone Maloz | |  | Victoria Segrera |
| Royal Engineering | | | |  | Shelley Sparks | |  | Kirk Rhinehart |
| Ryan Productions | | | |  | Andre’ Lyons | |  |  |
| Senator Bill Cassidy’s Office | | | | X | Kathy Stuart | |  |  |
| Senator John Kennedy’s Office | | | |  | Mary Elise Schlesinger | |  |  |
| Shell Oil Company | | | |  | Ian Voparil | |  | Shelley Piehet |
| Spahr’s Seafood Restaurant | | | |  | Donald Spahr | |  | Brent Roger |
| St. John Parish | | | |  | Evelyn Campo | | X | Ivy Mathieu |
| The Water Institute of the Gulf | | | | X | Scott Hemmerling  Erin White | |  | Monica Barra  Bruce Yuill |
| TLCD | | | |  | Angela Rains | |  | Darin Guidry |
| ***Guest Organization*** | | | |  | ***Guest*** | |  | ***Guest*** |
| UNO – CHART (Center for Hazards Assessment, Response & Technology) | | | |  | Melanie Sand | |  | Katherine Norwood  Bennett Alldredge |
| UNO – Nekton Research Laboratory | | | |  | Martin O’Connell | |  |  |
| US Geological | | | |  | Jacoby Carter | |  |  |
| University of Arizona | | | |  | Ben McMahan | |  |  |
| VISTA | | | |  | Katie DeHart | |  |  |
| WYES TV | | | |  | Marcia Kavanaugh | | X | Steven Patriquin |
| Thomassie Construction | | | |  | Thomas Thomassie | |  |  |
|  | | | |  | Vincent Guillory | |  |  |
|  | | | | X | Marty Bourgeois | |  |  |
|  | | | |  | Darryl Hambrinck | |  |  |
|  | | | |  | Doug Daigle | |  |  |
| Nicholls State University | | | |  |  | |  |  |
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| Entergy | | | |  | Denna Lafont | |  |  |
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| White Car Marketing | | | | X | Emily Knobloch | |  |  |
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| Loyola University | | | | X | Robert Thomas | |  |  |
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**Final Minutes from Management Conference Meeting #86 Final Minutes – February 7, 2019**

1. Meeting was called to order by Dr. Quenton Fontenot, BTNEP MC Chairman, at 9:30am.
2. Dr. Quenton Fontenot recognized Dr. Jay Clune from Nicholls.
3. Dr. Clune briefly welcomed everyone. He said that he was excited about the coastal initiative in place. He mentions open space for those interested in being closer to the coast. BTNEP, Restore or Retreat, SLEC were on campus. He noted that the new coastal representative at the MC meetings would be Monique Crochet. He closed by saying if there’s anything he can do; let him know.
4. Susan Testroet-Bergeron introduced herself as the director of the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program.
5. Management Conference members and guests were welcomed and asked to introduce themselves by stating their name and affiliation.
6. 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.
   2. Angela Rathle seconded the motion.
   3. Motion was approved by consensus.
7. **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**
8. Susan Testroet-Bergeron lead the discussion of the program activities. She mentions that Emily Knobloch with White Car Marketing has a contract with BTENP to help with press releases and social media. She welcomed Emily and she noted working with BTNEP. Gary LaFleur is also now the President of BTEF effective January 1st and Matt Sevier is the Vice President. Mrs. Susan thanked them for their leadership. Nicki Boudreaux is also doing some layout and design for BTNEP and recently finished our Annual Report. Richard was absent but also she said he recently finished his printing of his Louisiana Duck publication. She invited all to take copies of calendars, 2018 annual reports and duck publications.
9. Dean Blanchard mentioned EPA has written a paper on preparing for disaster. Out of 28 programs EPA chose 4 and BTNEP was one of them for our response to the BP Oil Spill. He and Susan are going to Washington in March for the annual EPA NEP meetings. He also mentioned that we are sending our annual report out to all the Congressmen and Senators. He also said EPA started giving grants for 3 years instead of 5 years.
10. Delaina LeBlanc gave an update of the Christmas Bird Count done on December 30th with 18 volunteers. There were 110 species spotted during this count and 3 more species on the weekend. There were higher counts of the Carolina Wrens and Chickadees.
11. Alma Robichaux mentioned her Marine Debris Prevention Program and that she’s in the second half of it. Students from 13 different high schools participate and go out to Elmer’s Island. They are learning about marine debris prevention and sources. The students also wrote a grant to Keep Louisiana Beautiful to set up refillable water stations at their schools and are hoping to get results for that soon. Alma said that she would talk about the microplastic curriculum and lesson plans later on in the meeting.
12. Natalie Waters gave an update on the Prothonotary Warbler monitoring and Osprey nest platform projects. Seventy-five Prothonotary Warbler nest boxes were monitored across three sites in 2018. Seventy-three percent of the Prothonotary Warbler nest boxes were used at least once by the warblers last season. Last February BTNEP partnered with Apache to install 10 Osprey nest platforms on Apache owned land and monitored the platforms throughout the breeding season. Three pairs of Osprey were observed bring nest material to three of the platforms but she didn’t witness the pairs incubating any eggs in 2018. She is hoping to have some successful nest attempts this season.
13. Siva Nunna announced that we received a $690,000 grant from the Gulf of Mexico Program to collect water quality samples to fix home sewage systems in the Bayou Lafourche Watershed. She will provide additional information as the project progresses.
14. Andrew Barron mentioned that BTNEP entered a new contract with the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality to continue doing work in the Bayou Folse Watershed. For this phase of the project BTNEP and its Partners will be conducting home sewage system inspections in individual homes. BTNEP also entered into a contract through the Foundation with South Central Planning. South Central Planning and BTNEP will be going door to door in the Bayou Folse Watershed and offering money to homeowners to fix their home sewage systems. The reason for doing this is because Bayou Folse is a critically impaired watershed. Andrew then presents his home sewage system model and encourages people to maintain their systems just as they would their vehicles.
15. Seth Moncrief spoke about the week of January 21st-25th where BTNEP had the University of Buffalo Alternative Breaks Program volunteering with us. Seth and Matt gave them information on BTNEP and then took a paddle trip from Bayou Morgan City to Bayou Sherman on Monday. Tuesday they worked with the Terrebonne Parish Consolidating Government on recycling Christmas trees. Wednesday they helped us prepare and load thousands of plants into a trailer so that the plants could be transported to Venice, LA to be put on the Spanish Pass Ridge. On Thursday they planted just over a thousand plants with 12 students and help from Plaquemines Parish Government. On Friday they had the Saving Marshes And Ridges Together initiative with Shell and Plaquemines Parish and planted 3,300 plants. In two days they planted more than 4,000 plants. He also noted that there are a few hundred calendars left so pick some up.
16. Susan mentioned that Matt has been working at our farm facility and he does an excellent job of growing our plants and has been working closely with CPRA and Plaquemines Parish. Matt has been growing out for about 10 years now with 10 species that are beneficial to migratory song birds. Species such as Live Oak, Red Mulberry, American Beauty Berry, and Wax Myrtle. He goes out to collect seeds and grow them out at the Nicholls State University Farm. Most of the plants planted at the Spanish Pass were Red Mulberry and some grasses. He noted BTNEP will be going back to Plaquemines Parish and doing some experimental planting at Grand Liard which is a CPRA project. He expressed concern about offshore sediment and saline sediments for growing the plants. He shared that the saline levels are currently too elevated so the many plants will stay another year. Robert Spears and the CPRA were mentioned as partners. Also, Matt and Jean Landry gave out trees for the Grand Isle Arbor Day.
17. Michael gave an update on the Grand Isle State Park Chinese Tallow removal project. A contractor has been out there a few times in the fall and a few times this winter. Over 2,000 Chinese Tallow have been removed and they’re getting to the point where they’re going to plant some natives in the next 2-3 months. Contractors will plant Red Mulberries, Live Oaks, and Hackberries. These were already present but were covered in Tallow and the Oaks have strange form due to this. A lot of Wax Myrtles finally now have some sunlight to grow properly. On the eastern edge of the park there was an area where morning glory was covering several live oaks.
18. Susan mentioned the media coverage over the past months. She also said that BTNEP has been in contact with EPA about funding. She also gave an update on the CCMP. BTNEP sent the CCMP up to Washington and had four major comments. I replied and said she’d fix three. She BCC’ed chairmen on into the comments. She felt they were close to being done.
19. **UPCOMING DATES**
    1. Management Conference – May 2nd, 2019
    2. Bayou Lafourche Cleanup – March 23, 2019
    3. Paddle Bayou Lafourche – April 11th-13th, 2019
    4. Migratory Bird Celebration – April 12th-14th, 2019
20. Susan turned it over to Quenton.
21. **DISCUSSION ITEMS**
    1. “Louisiana Master Naturalists Helping BTNEP Educate Adults about the Value of Estuary” – Dr. Robert A. Thomas, Professor and Director of the Loyola Center for Environmental Communication School of Mass Communication
       1. Dr. Thomas gave a brief overview of the program. Dr. Thomas said the Master Naturalists Program focuses on plants. He said the yellow flowers on the side of the road and the resurrection ferns and speaks to how this is still like a small ecosystem; many things live on these plants and in these plants. The Program is about looking at the natural world and being fascinated and learning the basics. The one thing they do that’s very important is that they’re sensitizing Louisiana people to the natural history of the places they live in. They tried setting up a program 30 years ago but the interest wasn’t there. Bob continued to explain how the program came to be and how it became of interest late 2011.They wanted it to be statewide and had many committees come in and explain their interest and enthusiasm. The program was officially launched the first chapter in 2012 in New Orleans. Due to funding issues all of the chapters became nonprofits. The Board for this organization has 3 people from each chapter and there are 21 members total. These chapters are in Lafayette, New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Monroe, Alexandria, Morgan City, Shreveport, and Lake Charles. He asked what would happen if they opened a chapter in a smaller town such as Thibodaux. He said that it doesn’t matter the size but that there are people who care about learning natural history and you don’t have to be an expert. He said new programs need structure in order to meet occasionally, be able to encourage others to volunteer, and to continue education in order to understand the way things work. Bob then showed a map of where the chapters are and explains it. The New Orleans Chapter have two courses a year and each is 14 workshops. They’re working on trying to diversify their target audience in order to bring more people into the program. Social media has been a big help. The program has placed BTNEP as a big supporting agency due to what Andrew, Seth, and Delaina have done at the workshops. He then went on to state the main purposes of the program again. He noted that Florida has a big program and goes on the put thousands of people into society that are sensitive about natural history. The reason this program is important to Louisiana is because of the issues with the coast. Florida has an annual rendezvous where all the chapters come together where they have many people giving workshops on different topics of naturalism and nature walks. He then further explains what happens within the program. The Program is a very hands-on education experience all over the state. Bob then goes on to thank Andrew and Michael for all of the support. He thanked everyone for coming out and took questions.
    2. “Research Indicates Microplastic in More Places” – Dr. Mark C. Benfield, LSU School of the Coast and Environment Department of Oceanography and Coastal Sciences
       1. Dr. Benfield started by thanking Alma for inviting him. He explained that he wanted to speak about some research that he’s been doing in his lab over the past few years of things that not only plagues Louisiana but all of the coast. He talked about microplastics as well as macroplastics. He talked about the goal for the Mississippi River in transporting these plastics into the Gulf of Mexico. Mark explained how plastic is everywhere in our community; whether there’s an article about it or you see it washed up on the shore. He’s said he’s not opposed to plastic but is opposed to certain types of plastic. Humans produced about 8.3 billion tons of plastic and 2.6 billion tons of that plastic is still in use. Around 0.8 billion tons have been incinerated but 4.9 billion tons are discarded. He’s said he’s been talking about single use plastics and will talk about getting rid of these. Any plastic bags used to carry things would take hundreds of years to degrade just for a few minutes of use. Many of these single use plastics are discarded on the ground and find their way to storm drains and some go in or bypass our treatment facilities and go directly into our bodies of water. Single use plastics accumulate and are in the most pristine areas such as parks. Plastics get caught in the Mississippi River which means they find their way to our river ways and our bayous. They ultimately make their way into the coast and the Gulf of Mexico and many of the single use plastics are hard to find or see. Mark once went onto one of LUMCON’s boats and sampled four stations off of Barataria Bay. They made a makeshift device to skim the water. He then showed a slide of a collage of what was found. They saw fragments, bigger plastics, fibers, and beads. A lot of these are very small. He then showed a slide describing the concentrations of what was found and just general concentrations in the Gulf. The logical candidate for this pollutant stream would be the Mississippi River. The Mississippi River is draining a huge portion of the United States and a little bit of Canada. Everything from this watershed goes into the Gulf so having a lot of plastics was expected. He then explains where these stations they were researching are and what procedures they went through to do this experiment. There were mainly Styrofoam in many of the samples. They were particularly interested in Davis Pond. They had an opportunity to sample some water from there and got a lot of microplastics. When you take those numbers from a 15-minute sample and scale it up to one day you get 388 million particles per day. That is definitely a cause for concern. We need more information and outreach on these issues and LUMCON is helping with research. Mark has some new equipment to help him, even a small drone due to the lack of funding for the boat trips. He hopes to get some preliminary data in order to receive funding to continue his research. The hopeful results are to reduce our discards. Mark took questions. One good point made was that putting a special filter over the pipe for the washer can reduce the amount of fibers going back into our waters. The consequences of fish consuming these fibers aren’t completely known but it should be.
    3. Marine Debris Prevention Lessons – Alma Robichaux Jackson, BTNEP and Dottie Hartman, LSU Grad Student
       1. Alma introduced the Marine Debris Prevention lessons. She said we find ourselves telling kids that pollution is bad. Now, we take them out to the beach to see it because they don’t get to see it much and these kids are amazed. Just like aluminum cans are now, someone needs to come up with a top that doesn’t come off plastic bottles. Perhaps a top that’s hooked on because they find the most tops at the beach. These don’t degrade fast so the bottles themselves may become particles that break down more into microplastics but the tops remain so we find a lot of those. Alma then shows a slide of what’s often found in a bird’s stomach which are bottle tops. She also said that Keep Louisiana Beautiful helped to get some legislation passes, Act 71, where litter education has to be included in K-5 classes. She noted that what we also want to talk about are one-use or single use plastics and using less or refusing them. It’s hard to tell someone to bring less bottles but it’s needed. Refilling bottles are also helpful. We had some extra money and we decided it was time to bring lessons to the students that the teachers could use in the classroom that are lined to the new standards. She then introduced Dottie Hartman, we couldn’t think of anyone better than Dottie Hartman to do it. Dottie went with Alma on one of her marine debris trips to Elmer’s Island and became very obsessed with marine debris and microplastics. Alma said BTNEP’s looking for workshops to get this information out and for funding. Trash free waters in 50 years is our goal and we can’t do that without the education. Alma then turns it over to Dottie Hartman.
       2. Dottie Hartman spoke about how she’s a retired science educator and does part-time education consulting now. She described the success of BTNEP and her interest and how it has changed her and her friends’ lives. December of 2017, she went to the National Science Teachers Association Convention for fun and decided to go to one of BTNEP’s marine debris workshops that was being held on Elmer’s Island. She loves seashells and knew they’d have a lot on Elmer’s Island. Alma packed up 20 teachers from around the nation, put them on a bus, and brought them out to the island. She showed and taught them about marine debris and how to identify it. Alma had Dottie go into the Gulf of Mexico in December and said for her to scoop up some water so she did. She brought everyone to the Port Fourchon Commission Building and talked more about marine debris. Alma took the water and pumped and sifted it and showed what was in it. There were countless pieces of small plastic fibers and after that all of the teachers asked for lesson plans. Dottie then realized that oysters filter-feed and take in all of these plastic fibers. These fibers overall affect the reproductive system of oysters. Dottie started working on these lesson plans and tried it out on senior citizens and they loved it. She then contacted Alma and they’ve been working on these lessons ever since. The Louisiana Science Standards have changed. Teachers used to talk about a bunch of ideas in science but wouldn’t focus on one specific thing. It has changed and now schools are being more selective about what they’re teaching the students and are spending more time making sure they understand these concepts which is a big deal in BTNEP’s response to the teachers asking for these lesson plans. The lessons are focused on 8th grade education, middle school Earth Science, and human environmental impacts. Dottie said, when you really look at that standard they are saying that we can teach about pollution and current ideas in the classroom. The standard-based lessons would be focused on how we can minimize the human impact on the environment. Some of the lessons include bags with beach samples for the students to sort through, lessons on where the trash comes from, how long to the trash lasts, which plastic basically lasts forever, bio magnification, and microplastics. These lessons have been tested on senior citizens and students and it’s been successful. Dottie then proceeds to give out a test and gives instructions. There are prizes involved and given to those who get answers right. Overall we need to increase education on these issues. Mrs. Susan then mentions that of the 50 states, Louisiana, as well as 6 other states, have standards in environmental education. She then commends Dottie and Alma on their work. Dottie then mentions that Louisiana is doing a good job in education. The state department has hosted a number of workshops for teachers to give them new teaching strategies and new tools to make science meaningful in the classroom. Those new teaching strategies are in the lesson plans. Plastic is amazing but single use plastics aren’t good. She then explains the impact this can have on the whole world. Dottie and Alma are also taking questions.
    4. “Feral Hog Survey in Terrebonne – Project Report” – Ben Hall
22. Michael Massimi introduced Ben Hall. Michael shared that 5 years ago BTNEP did an aerial survey of the feral hog damage in marshes in Terrebonne. Fast forward 5 years and a follow up study was done following some of the same trails. Dr. Kim Tolsen gave an update on that 5 years ago and now Benjamin Hall, a graduate who worked with Dr. Tolsen this go around, gave an update.
23. Ben Hall said he is a graduate of ULM and has been working under Dr. Tolsen. He thanked BTNEP and LDWF for the funding. Ben introduced the presentation objectives, including research, study site, materials, and his results from the first flight and second flight, a comparison between the two, and a little bit of geospatial analysis, followed up by a discussion and questions. The main research objectives were to conduct an aerial survey for feral hog damage done in the marsh in Terrebonne Parish. After the two surveys he wanted to make a comparison of the two results and see if there’s been more damage from the first flight to the second flight and would do a geospatial analysis. He also wanted to identify habitat qualities that feral hogs would be looking for so that when a management plan comes along they can use this data more effectively and can find where they’ll most likely have feral hogs. The study site is a 500,000-acre block of land. It contains 4 coastal marsh types, fresh, intermediate, brackish, and salt. The land is undeveloped and around Houma there’s some development. Apart from that there are some camps and sparsely distributed oil structures. As far as the waterways go there are bayous, lakes, basins, and man-made canals. The vegetation throughout the study site vary widely and are dictated widely by water salinity. Ben then proceeds to show images of the study site and explains them. The aerial surveys were mainly based off of the Nutria Control Program’s surveys. They used the same protocol so all the surveys were done in the same area and the helicopters were flying at the same altitude of 200 feet and the speed varied from 70 to 100 mph. Ben then explained the transects and where they are and how far apart they are. Once the researchers found damage, the helicopter would circle an area and make sure we got all the damage sites in that area. They’d make one pass to see the damage and then another pass was traced by a computer on the helicopter. After the path was saved the helicopter went down to about 5 to 10 feet in order for us to fill out a data sheet. On the data sheet they had the transect, the latitudes and longitudes. The hog damage was noted but so was storm and nutria damage. One of the main parts was the estimated size of the damage site and the estimated percentage of the area that was damaged. They also had a relative hog abundance rating as well as vegetative damage rating. Whether feral hogs were spotted or not was documented. If hogs were seen they counted how many and whether they were adults or juveniles. They also had plant species that were affected by rooting. Any plant species that were covering or adjacent to the damage sites. After doing the data sheet they went back up to about 200 feet and took some pictures of the damage sites for further comparisons. The comparisons, the photos and data sheets, were reviewed to see whether or not the damage sites grew. For the geospatial analysis Ben wanted to do GIS. To identify the habitat qualities that the feral hogs are wanting. He looked for marsh types and soil types to enlighten the data and other various factors. He showed a map that he pulled off of the NRCS website of a soil map and explained it. The results from the first flight is that they had a total of 13 damage sites and all of these sites were located in the western portion of the study site. He then further explains his findings. The difference between the studies is that the one done 5 years ago, all damage sites were in freshwater marshes. This study had 11 out of 13 sites in freshwater marshes. Ben also further explains the findings for the first flight such as the amount of damage, the number of hogs, and how many were adults and juveniles. Ben explains his findings on the map he got off of the NRCS website. He explains how the procedure was different for the second flight due to a lack of funding. He explained how they flew to the damage sites and then flew the transects in the northwestern corner. The second flight showed no damage at all. Every damage site had full plant regeneration and from what they can tell it was only natural invasives that they could see. No further damage was found in the northwestern quadrant and didn’t see a single pig the whole flight. Ben then shows images taken from the second flight and compares them to the first flight. The thoughts on this so far is that instead of digging for roots and causing damage, they’re eating plants above ground. He then describes possible causes and solutions. He believes the hogs are still in the study site but weren’t visible. Making another flight before plants start growing again would save time. Ben then gives further solutions. He then takes questions.
24. Michael mentions how we wrote up a fact sheet on the project and offered to hand out copies.
    1. Ed Landgraf
       1. Over a year ago the BTEF Foundation received a grant to improve pipeline safety. He wanted to give an update about what they’ve done so far. They made PSA’s that will be shown on local TV stations. CAMO’s been working with BTNEP for years, going back to Kerry St. Pe’ and Dean. The prosects have placed awareness ads in the Louisiana Sportsman Magazine and have a plan to do a mass-mail. CAMO also worked with CCA, the Coastal Conservation Association, and they have a fisheries outreach program and they will incorporate their information into the CCA’s outreach program. They also have information on safe dredging so that they don’t hit pipelines. They’ve also held some stakeholder workshops and had 200 plus people attend. Susan mentioned that there were three people they needed to thank: Seth Moncrief, Nicole Lundberg and their son Wyatt Moncrief. Seth and Wyatt were in the PSA’s and Wyatt is only 4. Ed mentions how they have an outline for where they want to play these PSA’s and it’s all around pipeline safety and trying to tie in those using the estuary. If they get the final approval for these they will start playing them fairly quickly. Ed then plays the PSA’s.
25. **NEW BUSINESS** 
    1. No new business.
26. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**
    1. Quenton Fontenot announced that May 2nd will be the next Management Conference in the Ballroom and will be our annualcrawfish boil.
    2. Seth Moncrief mentioned the promoting of education of where to dump your crawfish peelings.
    3. a documentary. He said 150 tourists came by to see the headquarters in Mississippi and none of these people understood what was happening to the coast of Louisiana.
    4. Bob Thomas explained he was
27. **ADJOURNED**
28. Dr. Quenton Fontenot, MC Chairman, asked if there was a motion to adjourn.
29. A motion was made by Angela Rathle
30. Seconded by Dwayne Bourgeois
31. Motion was approved by consensus. The meeting was adjourned.