Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program

Management Conference Meeting #88 Roll Call

Plantation Suite near Student Union

9:30 a.m. – Thursday, August 1, 2019

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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  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 | | X | Benjamin Malbrough |
| Cajun Music Preservation | | | | 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 | Stuart Brown  Carol Parsons Richard  Daniel Dearmond  Darin Lee  Kellyn LaCour  Elizabeth Shoenfelt  Robert Routon  Alexis Rixner  Honora Buras  Joseph “Wes” LeBlanc  Michael Ellis  Rudy Simoneaux  Thomas McLain |
| 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 | | | | X | Lauren Averill | |  | Seamus Riley |
| 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 | | X | Faran Dietz  Jeremy Rodriguez |
| LA Dept. of Culture, Recreation and Tourism | | | |  | Debra Credeur | |  | Karen Leathem  Linda Smith |
| LA Dept. of Economic Development | | | |  | Paul Sawyer | |  |  |
| LA Department of Education | | | |  | Jill Cowart | |  | Lydia Hill |
| LA Department of Environmental Quality | | | |  | Aimee Preau  Crisalda Adams | | X | John Sheehan  Jonathan McFarland  John Jennings |
| ***Management Conference Member*** | | | |  | ***Member*** | |  | ***Alternate*** |
| LA Department of Health and Hospitals | | | | X | Kathy LeBlanc  Chance Wooton | |  | Lauren Comeaux |
| LA Department of Natural Resources | | | | X | Charles Reulet | | X | Sara Krupa  Robert Williamson |
| LA Department of Wildlife and Fisheries | | | |  | 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 | | | |  | Tim Allen | |  | Randy Moertle |
| LA Mid Continent Oil & Gas Association | | | | X | Lori LeBlanc | |  | Ed Landgraf  Melissa Cloutet |
| LA Oil Spill Coordinators Office | | | |  | Marty J. Chabert | | X  X | Eva Windhoffer  Karolien Debusschere  Tori Copeland  Jennifer Beall |
| 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 | | | |  | Jimmy Cantrelle | | X | 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  Dick Krajeski |
| LUMCON | | | | X | Dr. Craig McClain  John Conover | | X | Heidi Boudreaux  Amber Bonvillain |
| National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) | | | | X | Craig Gothreaux  Richard Hartman | |  | Mel Landry  Alexis Rixner  Shannon Martin |
| Nicholls State University | | | | X | Dr. Jay Clune  Monique Crochet  Dr. John Doucet | | X | Mrs. Allison Clune  Gary LaFleur  Chris Bonvillain |
| Plaquemines Parish | | | | X | Vincent Frelich  Robert Spears | |  | Scott Rousselle  Krista Clark  John Helmers |
| Point Coupee Parish | | | |  | J.A. Rummler | |  |  |
| South Central Planning and Development Commission | | | | X | Kevin Belanger  Martha Cazaubon | |  | Pat Gordon  Stephanie Brunning |
| South Louisiana Economic Council (SLEC) | | | |  | Vic Lafont | |  | Simone Maloz  Victoria Sagrera |
| South Louisiana Wetlands Discovery Center | | | |  | Jonathan Foret | | X | Angelle Percle  Samantha Hicks |
| ***Management Conference Member*** | | | |  | ***Member*** | |  | ***Alternate*** |
| St. Charles Parish | | | |  | Earl Matherne | |  | Kim Marousek |
| St. John Parish | | | |  | Evelyn Campo | | X | Ivy Mathieu |
| Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government | | | |  | 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 |
| US Coast Guard | | | |  | Capt. Wade Russell | | X | Kevin McCormack |
| US Corps of Engineers | | | | X | Sarah Bradley | | X  X  X | Barbara Kleiss  Mark Wingate  Cheri Price  Kaitlyn Carriere  Brad Inman  Alice Kerl |
| US Environmental Protection Agency | | | | X | Doug Jacobson | |  | Rachel Houge |
| US Fish & Wildlife Service | | | | X | Ronnie Paille  Brigette Firmin | |  | John Savell  Jeff Weller  Brad Rieck  Bryan Pember |
| USDA/NRCS | | | | X | Quin Kinler  John Boatman  Joshua Anderson | | X | Alton James  Lacy Bellanger |
| USGS | | | | X | Scott Wilson | | X  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*** |
| Aqua Safety-First Community Program | | | |  | Woodrow Parker | |  | Lee Hulsey |
| Atchafalaya NHA | | | |  | Steven Fullen | |  | Justin Owens |
| Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary Foundation | | | | X  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 | | | | X | Dottie Hartman | |  |  |
| Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) | | | |  | Bruce Baird | | X | Victoria Phaneuf |
| Conoco Phillips | | | | X | Betsy Brien  Jeffery Bacon | | X | Ashley Golmon |
| CRIA | | | |  | Chris Adams | |  |  |
| Daily Comet / Houma Courier | | | | X | 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 | |  |  |
| Lori LeBlanc LLC | | | |  | Tyler Gray | |  | Melissa Cloutet |
| Louisiana Appleseed | | | |  | Stephanie Beaugh | |  |  |
| LSU | | | |  | Dr. Benjamin Springgate  Loren Hull  Nancy Rabalais | | X | Jennifer Sato  R Eugene Turner  Ashley Everette |
| Moffatt & Nichol | | | |  | Jonathan Hird | |  |  |
| Nicholls State University | | | |  | Alex Arceneaux  Jenny Schexnayder | |  | Allyse Ferrara  Keri Turner |
| Office of Congressman Garret Graves | | | |  | David Cavell | | X | Dustin Davidson |
| Pan Am Communication | | | | X | Lenny Delbert | | X | Emma Reid |
| 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 John Kennedy’s Office | | | |  | Mary Elise Schlesinger | |  |  |
| Shell Oil Company | | | |  | Ian Voparil | | X | Joni Tuck |
| Spahr’s Seafood Restaurant | | | |  | Donald Spahr | |  | Brent Roger |
| The Water Institute of the Gulf | | | | X | Scott Hemmerling  Erin White  Huy Ju | |  | Monica Barra  Bruce Yuill  Christine DeMeyers |
| 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 Survey (USGS) | | | |  | Jacoby Carter | |  |  |
| University of Arizona | | | | X | Ben McMahan | |  |  |
| VISTA | | | |  | Katie DeHart | |  |  |
| White Car Marketing | | | |  | Cody Blanchard | | X | Emily Knobloch |
| WYES TV | | | | X | Marcia Kavanaugh | |  |  |
|  | | | |  | Vincent Guillory | |  |  |
|  | | | |  | Marty Bourgeois | |  |  |
| Southern University | | | |  | Veronica Manrique | |  |  |
|  | | | |  | Darryl Hambrinck | |  |  |
|  | | | | X | Doug Daigle | |  |  |
| BTNEP Student Workers | | | | X  X | Kaitlyn Tabor  Emily Duplantis | | X | Alexis Jones |
| Citizen | | | | X | David Gislair | |  |  |
| Hurdles with Nurdles | | | | X | Jace Tunnell | |  |  |
|  | | | | X | Albertine Kimble | |  |  |
| US Fish & Wildlife Service | | | |  | William Vermillion | |  |  |
| APTIM | | | | X | Chris Paul | |  |  |
| C\_LEARN | | | | X | Ashley Everette | |  |  |
| City of Thibodaux | | | | X | Archie Chaisson | |  |  |
|  | | | |  |  | |  |  |
| NSU | | | | X  X  X | Justine Whitaker  Timothy Clay  Thea Fredrickson | | X  X | Jesse DuBose  Ben Bates |
| Norman Wildlife Consulting | | | | X | Donald Norman | |  |  |
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**Final Minutes from Management Conference Meeting #88 Final Minutes – August 1, 2019**

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. Susan Testroet-Bergeron introduced Amber Bonvillain as BTNEP/LUMCON IT – Information Technology staff
4. 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. Dwayne Bourgeois seconded the motion.
   3. Motion was approved by consensus.
5. **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

Dean Blanchard led the discussion of the program activities. Recently, legislatively, Senator Cassidy co-sponsored National Estuary Week Resolution which will be September 15th-21st. He’s done it in the past and he’s doing it again. Dean mentioned that it’s time for National Estuary Programs to start the steps of being reauthorized again. Congressman Garret Graves is co-sponsoring that bill – HR 4044. We will hear more about that later. Susan then mentioned that there was 26.5 million dollars for all of the NEPs. Garret Graves and the other co-sponsors are trying to up the allocation to 50 million dollars. It is uncertain of what will happen since it’s just the beginning of the process. She then introduced Alma Robichaux.

Alma Robichaux mentioned the Louisiana Floor Map was created with an education grant. The map travels around the state to different schools and students are able to learn geography, coastal management, and most importantly about the state that they live in. She then offered to lend it to anyone who wants it and said that it comes with a curriculum materials. Alma also said she went to WETSHOP but was cut short due to Hurricane Barry. WETSHOP, a program that Alma manages but Andrew Barron also goes and does plant walks. Seth and Matt take teachers out to the ridge, one of their restoration projects at Port Fourchon. Delaina went to teach about the birds. It’s really an event for the whole staff. Alma also went to the Gulf of Mexico Alliance All Hands Meeting in June in Gulf Shores. Next year’s going to be Embrace the Gulf 2020 so all of the Gulf States will be involved in it. She then asks for help with promoting Embrace the Gulf 2020.

Susan then introduced John Conover from LUMCON to talk about the aftermath of Hurricane Barry at LUMCON. John started off by saying that they had 3 to 5 inches of mud in certain places, on the concrete slab and in the parking lot and 4 ½ feet of water in the bottom of the building. They also had kayaks that floated away. John mentioned that he’s unsure whether or not they’re open to the public or not yet but most of the mess is cleaned up. Susan introduced Robert Spears from Plaquemine Parish to talk about what happened in his parish. Robert mentioned that they also got about 4 to 5 feet of water and about 3 to 4 feet of water in the pasture near their office. It took about 7 days to pump out all of the water. There were about 3 levee breaches in the levee that goes around the Myrtle Grove Marina which is what filled everything up. No houses were flooded on the second floor but some got water on the bottom floor. The north bound lane was closed for about two days because of water on it. The south bound lane was still dry so both ways of traffic was using it. People were in an evacuation shelter for about 3 days and they’re finally starting to get back to normal. Susan thanked John and Robert for the updates.

Susan mentioned that Andrew Barron and Siva Nunna have been continuing their work on Bayou Folse doing their monitoring. They’re also helping families repair their home sewage systems. They’re working with South Central Planning and Development Commission. BTNEP has also begun writing contracts for the Bayou Lafourche project. As well as working in Bayou Folse, Siva will be working on Bayou Lafourche doing water sampling.

On the scientific bird research, Richard DeMay and his team have completed their Piping Plover surveys, breeding bird surveys were done, Delaina did Red Knot surveys and Natalie is done with her Prothonotary Warbler work. Last time they went out they had one baby Prothonotary Warbler left.

The week before BTNEP had two volunteer days at the farm and the volunteers were very helpful. BTNEP has also been working with CPRA on work with experimental planting at Grand Liard. Susan stated that those were a few of the events that BTNEP has been working on. Susan then mentioned that the company Marsh Dog that makes dog treats from nutria is back up and running and they were on the front page of the news and were kind enough to mention BTNEP.

BTNEP has been working closely with EPA trying to get close to finishing up the CCMP.

Richard wanted to remind everyone that at the last Management Conference the people from The Water Institute of the Gulf gave a presentation on the climate ready estuary process that BTNEP is currently going through. He mentioned that they previously asked for people to help complete those surveys. He asked if the attendees at the current meeting would go through and complete the survey. Once the survey is finished he asked for it to be sent to Scott or Huy with TWIG.

1. **UPCOMING DATES**
   1. BTNEP Management Conference – November 7th, 2019
   2. National Estuary Week – September 14th, 2019
   3. White Boot Gala – September 24th, 2019
   4. Keep Louisiana Beautiful Conference – September 25th-26th, 2019
   5. Association of National Estuary Programs Conference – October 1st-4th, 2019
   6. Louisiana Science Teachers Association Meeting – November 4th-6th, 2019
   7. Fall Paddle Trip – October 11th, 2019
2. **DISCUSSION ITEMS**
3. “Adaptation: A Natural Way of Life” – Lenny Delbert, Pan AM Communications, Inc.

Susan introduced Lenny Delbert and said that they’ve been working together for years and Lenny owns a company called Pan Am Communications and works closely with WYES TV in New Orleans. BTNEP has been working with many of the attendees on restoration projects and thought it was time that they create something for the public to know a little bit more about what BTNEP has been doing.

Lenny Delbert introduced the video and mentioned that it was basically a 20-minute teaser video that’s going to be about an hour long that will air on WYES. It’s an introduction to the video that Lenny and BTNEP have been working on. Lenny mentioned that they’re open to input and opinions. The video is then played for everyone to watch. Lenny then introduced Marcia Kavanaugh who produced the video. Lenny also mentioned that the video is just the framework of the video.

Susan then thanked everyone who was in the video and who helped make it.

1. Susan then introduced Dustin Davidson who was with the Office of Congressman Garret Graves. Dustin said that what they’re most excited about is that they’ve recently joined the effort to reauthorize the National Estuary Programs. He expressed his concern towards the environmental issues Louisiana has. Dustin described the new House Bill to reauthorize the National Estuary Programs.
2. “Mississippi River High Water Event: Status and Impacts” –Brad Inman, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Brad Inman mentioned that it’s been a very busy year at the US Army Corps of Engineers. Brad gave a brief overview of what’s been going on since the event of the high water. People have been talking about the record breaking water height. He showed a chart with 125 years of rainfall shown on it and it showed that Illinois had its wettest year on record. Most states were in the top range for the wettest year on record. This is a historical event with the highest rainfalls most of the states have ever had. Brad then shows a map with the drainage area of the Mississippi River, it basically encompasses all of the states that are either at or near all-time highs of rainfall. This can go back to Hurricane Florence where it got into the Ohio Valley and the area has been in a high water event ever since.

Phase I is a flood fight where water is at 11 feet at the Carrollton gage. They go into a Phase I flood fight which means they need to go look at the levees a couple times a week and inspect them with all of the levee boards. Also, Phase I is when the Morgan City gage is at 5 feet and again they would look at all of the levees. Phase II is at 15 feet at Carrollton. Phase II means you can’t touch anything within 1,500 feet of the levees. That means all of the industries, refineries, etc., cannot do any work within that boundary. That also means that USACE would have to inspect everyday down all of the levees. There’s also a 24-hour emergency center set up that has people working it day and night. Brad then shows some of the records from different years and different locations of the amount of consecutive days above the flood stage. A lot of the records are from the 1927 flood that caused an act to be passed that allowed levees to be built along the Mississippi River and Atchafalaya. Twice a week or more often as needed, the USACE has flood fight meetings where they come in and talk about what’s going on. By July 30th, they’ve been in the Phase II flood fight for 169 consecutive days which means they’ve had people working the office 24/7 and people inspecting 333 site close to all of those 169 days. There are priority sites where they know for sure they have issues and are monitored constantly. Those flood fight days aren’t budgeted in and it also affects the levee boards because they don’t budget it in. Brad then mentioned the things the team is looking for on the levees such as a relief well, sand boil, seepage through the levee, encroachments, excavations, erosion, and levee slides.

Good news is that the river is starting to come down. They at one point had to look at the Ohio/Mississippi River Crest Watch. There were still things in action but it was previously still in the major flood stage. On July 28th the water fell under 15 feet so at that point they were out of Phase II and flood fight 24/7. Brad mentioned that they’re hopeful that they’ll be out of Phase I by the end of August. With the flood events, this system has been engineered to pass the flood safely and has worked as designed. There was no lost life, no failures along the levees, and no one having issues from these events.

Brad then showed a map of the flood design. When looking at the plotting of the river, one thing you see is that the Ohio River is feeding the Mississippi River. He went on and explained a little bit about the map. He then showed an aerial view of the Old River Control Structure. The USACE are doing a technical assessment of this area to see if anything needs to be fixed and moved. They’re also seeing how safe and secure it is considering it’s been doing its job. The Red River comes in on the left side of the control complex. People use about 30% of the water going down the Atchafalaya River and 70% of the water in the Mississippi River. The reason why more water can’t be put into the Atchafalaya River is because all of the water coming from the Red River was already putting water in the Atchafalaya River without much from the Mississippi River. They came incredibly close to opening up the Morganza this year. They were waiting for it to be opened day by day but they didn’t have to. Brad then explained some of the things looked at that determined whether or not it would be opened. They would’ve had to coordinate this with Wildlife and Fisheries and the State. There would also be a lot of farm land that would’ve been wiped out if the floodgate would’ve been opened. There are a lot of consequences from opening up the Morganza. They open it if it reaches certain flood elevations and all of the triggers are hit. The city dropped a barge in Bayou Chene to keep the water from flowing as much.

The Bonnet Carre’ has only been opened up 14 times and a total of 4 times in the last four years. Brad mentioned that they are seeing about using the sand from the Bonnet Carre’ and using it to help build the base of a levee. All 350 bays were closed this year. There are more impacts to federal projects than needing more staff to check the levees. Brad then showed a map of all of the important ports in South Louisiana. They’ve been working hard in the Southwest Pass. Brad then explained the map of these passes and the things they’ve done. As of June 2019, all vessels were restricted to 42 feet maximum draft to enter or exit the Mississippi River but Brad mentioned that they convinced them to bring it up to 50 feet. They’ve also been given about 90 million dollars to dredge the Mississippi River and they’ve gone through about 80 so far.

One issue that came up was what was going to happen if a tropical event came up. Hurricane Barry came up and pushed our water up to cautious heights. It was believed that Louisiana was going to get up to 20 inches of rainfall. They also predicted that the Carrollton would rise up to 20 feet but it never went over 17 feet. Brad then showed charts comparing the hurricane frequency and the river discharge. He mentioned how the USACE prepared for the potential flooding in their warehouse that is along the river. The amount of rain that fell has caused a rise in water in many places and has paused or affected projects going on. The good news is that the river is starting to fall so now they’re starting to be able to look at levees and fix them. He then took questions.

1. “Preliminary Assessment of Restoration Impacts in the Isles Dernieres, Terrebonne Parish, LA” – Darin Lee, Coastal Protection Restoration Authority

Darrin Lee introduced his topic and mentioned that he presented it to the CPRA Board. He said that the main thing he’ll be talking about is the land changes such as land loss and what happens when land loss happens.

A lot of times people pump sand onto Grand Isle because of the community there and structures but Isles Dernieres was one of the first places where building up the land came up in conversation. Darin then talked about how Terrebonne Parish started this up in the past. He then showed a map of erosion rates in South Louisiana and a few of the parishes. Isles Dernieres and southern Terrebonne Parish have some of the highest erosion rates in the world. For example, Whiskey Island erodes at about 52 feet per year.

The barrier islands are a part of a deltaic cycle from the river switching back and forth. He then referred to how Brad Inman talked about controlling the flow of the river and the floodgates. Many years ago it was decided that the Mississippi River was going to be locked in place. Not many people flooded but now the river was disconnected from the wetlands. Darin then went on to explain what the path of the Mississippi River did before it was locked in place. Barrier Islands wouldn’t exist without erosion and the movement of sediment. A map was shown of the evolution of the Mississippi Deltaic Plain barrier islands to show the process that caused these islands to accumulate. Grand Isle wouldn’t exist without something eroding and being transported elsewhere. Over time, the sand continues to be transported and becomes built up under water. The estuaries behind the islands are also taken into consideration. The amount and size of tidal passes is dependent on what the size of the wetland area is. As land is lost, that land is replaced with water which means more water has to get in and out of the estuary in the same amount of time. That causes it to need bigger or more openings. Since the sand is being taken out, the idea is that they’re going to put the sand back and allow it to move and transport in order to restore those processes that are maintaining the barrier islands.

What they do is they find sand, collect it, and they deposit it through a pipeline and put it on the shoreline. Darin then compared a picture of Shell Island from June 2012 and one from August 2013. It’s possible to pump a tremendous amount of sand, raise the elevation, widen the island, and create marsh habitats that are eventually going to vegetate. The idea is that they pump the sand up at an unusual slope but the waves shape it back to its natural state. After a year, much of the sand has been washed away but the coast is still built up more than it would’ve been without the efforts. Darin then showed a few slides explaining this process. The idea is that without the project there would be very little land above the water but with the project there would be more land above the water even after several years. Darin then showed and explained a chart on the shoreline changes of the Isles Dernieres between 1887 and 2005. With the efforts, they have been able to slow down the constant erosion of these coasts.

Darin mentioned that the Barrier Island Comprehensive and Monitoring Program (BICM) that he works with looks at the barrier shoreline, looks at the barrier islands, goes back and collects information from the past, and bringing it in to standardize it to compare it to the data they have now. One of the important factors is the land area because they want to know where the shoreline was and how much land it represents at various point in time.

Darin mentioned one question they have is after starting restoration in the 90’s, what impacts did that have on the Isles Dernieres. Darin mentioned that they go back and study past projects to collect information on the impacts this has had on several different islands. He then showed and explained several charts on the restoration events and erosion on Trinity/East Island, Whiskey Island, and Raccoon Island between 1970 and now with projections up to 2030. He also explained the various habitats on these islands. Without the efforts, most of the land we still have would’ve been long gone. These studies are constantly being done because the data is constantly changing. By closing a lot of the gaps along the edges, it’s allowing the waves to move some of the sediment and in-turn building the shoreline out. Darin then took questions.

1. “Hurdles with Nurdles: Gulf-wide Research Project” – Jace Tunnell

Jace thanked everyone for having him and started off by asking how many people knew what a Nurdle was. He then passed around a bag of Nurdles that was collected on the Mississippi River and near the Lafourche Crossing. Nurdles are little plastic pellets that are melted down and made into actual products. Most of these pellets are polyethylene which are made into single use plastics. The numbers seen on plastics represent the type of plastic it is. Jace then showed an image of how these Nurdles are made. It’s started by taking oil from the ground, the oil is refined, the chemicals are pulverized into the pellets, and the pellets are shipped off throughout the whole world.

He then explained how these pellets are introduced to the environment. Many of these pellets are spilled as they are being transported from vehicle to vehicle, while they’re in transit, and from factories because they’re small and lightweight and can be blown around by the wind. These Nurdles are also shipped to different countries by ship so these pellets fall off of the boat and often end up on coasts and beaches. Jace then showed images of nurdle spills in the different settings previously mentioned. He showed an image of the currents in the Gulf of Mexico and explained how that can determine where Nurdles can be deposited.

One of the biggest impacts these Nurdles have are to wildlife. Animals eat these and if they’re not passed the animals feel full and starve to death since these have no nutritional value to these animals. These pellets also absorb toxins in the environment. He then mentioned that these toxins are passed through the food chain as its ingested. These Nurdles turn yellow in the sun and can look like something that naturally occurs such as sargasm bulbs or fish eggs.

Jace mentioned that they started a citizen science project to be able to monitor where these pellets are coming from and how many of them are found. He then showed a distribution map and commented on how there are not one points of data that’s been taken. They came up with the idea of going out for ten minutes and start counting how many Nurdles you could find and then send in your location, date, time, how many Nurdles, and how many people were looking. The Nurdles can come in different shapes, sizes, and colors. He then showed several maps of the gulf coast with the amount of Nurdles collected in certain areas along the coast. Jace also mentioned that the currents in the Gulf can affect where the Nurdles are deposited and found. He then showed a chart with about 14 different manufacturers in North America that are either going to expand or are new facilities that are going to be built for just polyethylene production.

There are several things that can be done to avoid or lessen the number of spills. This includes following the guidelines of Operations Clean Sweep, develop data base to link Nurdles to manufacturers, create a chain of custody for Nurdles being shipped, stricter storm water permits, quick accountability by plastic pellet industry, and at home you can refuse, reduce, reuse, repurpose, and recycle. Jace stated that he hoped that they’ll be coming out with a website for nurdle patrol in this month of August. People will be able to send in their data on their phone and it’ll pop up automatically on a map. He mentioned that he’s looking for organizations to participate in the citizen science project. He then took questions.

1. Susan mentioned moving to amend the agenda and add a discussion of the fact to nominate new officers for next year. The BTNEP bylaws state that they’re supposed to elect officers every two years. The next vote will be taken in November 2019. MC agreed.
2. **NEW BUSINESS** 
   1. Nutrient Management Strategy Discussion and Vote – Doug Daigle; Louisiana Hypoxia Working Group; LMRSBC. Doug Discussed the Nutrient Management Project and asked BTNEP to send a letter of support.
   2. Quenton asked if there was a motion to support Nutrient Management Strategy as outlined in the previous resolution passed by the BTNEP management conference.
   3. A motion was made by Doug Daigle.
   4. Seconded by Dr. Gary LaFleur.
   5. Motion was passed with unanimous consent.
3. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**
   1. No Announcements
4. **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 Darin Lee.
   4. Motion was approved by consensus. The meeting was adjourned.