

## BISTINEAU TASK FORCE

JAN. 15, 2015 Minutes

At 10:15, the meeting was called to order on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Webster Parish Courthouse. The Chairman welcomed all attendees.

The opening Prayer was provided by Bob Brotherton.

Next, Rick Yager led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Then, the roll call was announced.

Present : Steve Ramsey, Webster Parish; Bob Brotherton, Bossier Parish; Pete Camp- At large; Charlie Walker, Webster Parish; Jim Bonsall, Webster Parish; Rick Yager, Webster Parish; Glenn Benton, Bossier Parish;

Absent : Elmore Morris, Bossier Parish; Tony Lawson, Bienville Parish; Greg Wilson, Bienville Parish; Bill Conly, Bienville Parish;

Special Assistants: Ellzey Simmons, CEO-Trailblazer Resource Conservation & Development and Olivia Ward, Biologist- Trailblazer staff.

The minutes from September 18<sup>th</sup> were reviewed and approved including a summary of the open comment period which was conducted September 1-18. Results were mailed to LDWF in Baton Rouge, plus Senator Adley, Rep. Reynolds and Rep. Burns.

Lee Eisenberg was introduced as the featured guest speaker for this meeting. His introduction was as follows: He received his B. S. in Biology (summa cum laude) from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette (LA) in May, 2002. He worked full-time time as a Research Associate while attending classes at LSU Baton Rouge, and received his M.S. in Entomology in 2011 (specializing in biological control of giant salvinia). His thesis dealt with the reproductive system of the salvinia weevil. In March, 2012, Lee went to work raising salvinia weevils at Caddo Lake for Texas A & M University. Weevil populations became established on the lake for the first time on Caddo in 2012, and some overwintering weevils have since been observed. He has served as an advisor to the Trailblazer / BTF team since May, 2013, helping developed the proposed plans for the proposed "Salvinia Weevil Production Facility" to be located on Lake Bistineau. He is currently working as a contractor for a local NGO, The Greater Caddo Lake Association, that has an interest in biological control of giant salvinia, in Uncertain, Texas.

He discussed the salvinia weevil as one of the most important tools to fight giant salvinia. He stated the fact that giant salvinia has been a major problem around the world and the weevil has been the only control method that has been proven to be effective. He discussed both the pros and cons of raising weevils. Our cooler climate in N. Louisiana will periodically destroy weevil populations. His answer to that is weevils that are mass produced in temperature controlled green houses; when the cold weather kills the weevils, it also kills GS. Weevils would then be reintroduced. He hopes to accrue valuable data this summer providing "local" results with the weevil.

Jeff Sibley with the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries spoke to the BTF concerning Lake Bistineau.

\*Mr. Sibley added to the discussion of Weevils and he talked about Draw Downs; He said The LDWF has put about 2 million weevils in Lake Bistineau since 2007. More will be put in the lake in the coming months. At this point, the LDWF has not been able to identify any impacts that the weevils have had on giant salvinia in Lake Bistineau.

A monthly survey of GS acreage will begin in April.

He discussed the fact that there is too much misinformation out there. He encouraged folks to pick up the phone to call him. He did say you can go to the LDWF site and download their press releases for the most accurate information.

Jeff plans to announce some evening meetings to brief stakeholders on current developments. All of the details have not been worked out; these might begin in March. Attendees will need to sign up due to limited space available.

In other BTF business, a proposed 2015 BTF meeting schedule was presented and approved by the members. The dates were Jan.15, Mar 19, July 23 and September 17<sup>th</sup>. All meeting will begin at 10:15 and will be conducted on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Webster Parish courthouse.

The chairman noted special appreciation to Weldon Thomas for his support of the BTF with his Lake Bistineau Facebook page and its 1,600 members.

Dr. Shiyou Li from SFA University was also recognized in attendance and was invited to be the BTF featured speaker in a future meeting.

In conclusion, Task Force members were invited to make final comments. Jim Bonsall and others thanked everyone for coming and for their support.

There being no further business to bring before the BTF, Mr. Montgomery closed the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted

PE Simmons