

MINUTES OF THE BISTINEAU TASK FORCE

January 5, 2012

Webster Parish Police Jury

410 Main Street – 2nd Floor

Minden, Louisiana

ATTENDING: Billy W. Montgomery, Bossier PJ-Chairman; Jim Bonsall, Webster PJ; Steve Ramsey, Webster PJ; Charles Walker, Webster PJ; Tony Lawson, Bienville PJ; Glenn Benton, Bossier PJ; Bill Altimus, Bossier PJ; David Lowe, Dorcheat Soil & Water C.; Rick Yager, Dorcheat S.W.C.; Elmore Morris, Bodcau Soil & Water C.; Shannon Mendenhall, Bodcau SWCD; George McConathy, Saline SWCD; and Pete Camp, at large.

ABSENT: Greg Wilson, Bienville PJ; Bill Sims, Bienville PJ; Bill Conley, Saline SWCD

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE: Ronda Carnahan, Webster PJ; James Seales, LA WF; Evan Thames, LA WF; Ellzey Simmons, Trailblazer; and Olivia Ward, Trailblazer

Chairman, Billy W. Montgomery called the meeting to order. Elmore Morris opened the meeting with Prayer and Jim Bonsall led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Secretary, Ronda Carnahan called roll of the Committee Members.

Chairman, Billy Montgomery gave opening comments to begin the Bistineau Task Force Meeting. The agenda was reviewed and adopted with no changes.

The minutes of the September 29, 2011 BTF Meeting were presented for review, there being no amendments to the minutes, Mr. Jim Bonsall moved, seconded by Mr. Charles Walker to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Mr. Ellzey Simmons, Trailblazer Rural Development Institute, reported on the BTF Action Plan that will help implement strategic measures in the War on Giant Salvinia. Mr. Simmons also discussed funding of the action plan. The revision to the plan included the purchase of special equipment to be used in the War on Giant Salvinia and an equipment list is attached to the plan. Mr. Pete Camp discussed the donation program that he is working on to solicit funding from individuals and businesses concerned with Lake Bistineau. The funding that will be raised is so that the plan can be implemented. A majority vote of the BTF will be needed before any money is spent on equipment, supplies, etc. Mr. Glenn Benton moved, seconded by Mr. Charles Walker to accept the revised Action Plan including the equipment list as provided. Motion carried unanimously.

Representative Gene Reynolds spoke to the BTF members about proposed legislation that would provide a stable funding source which would concern the lake bottom mineral rights. Mr. Reynolds will keep the Task Force updated on the progress of this legislation.

Mr. Bob Brotherton, Bossier Parish Police Juror expressed his support of all efforts of the Task Force.

Mrs. Jackson, a Lake Bistineau Resident reported on her research of State / Federal lawsuit that is ongoing concerning the Mineral Rights of the Lake Bottom of Bistineau.

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Mr. Evan Thames, Biologist, LDWF, Minden Office, updated the Task Force on various issues. Mr. Thames told the Task Force that there has been a cut in employees, and there are fewer crews for the entire district. The Backyard Spraying or Private Application training is still on schedule for February. Information is available on the BTF Web Site or by calling the LA Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries office.

Concerning the Giant Salvinia control, Mr. Thames stated that everyone is able to use the lake for fishing, duck hunt, recreational use of the lake, etc., and the lake levels are good.

Mr. Thames gave an update on Contract Spraying – he is able to continue with the contract spraying. The Tree removal permit application has been sent to the Corp. of Engineers and he does have people interested in harvesting, but cannot do harvesting until there is a draw down. One concern that Mr. Thames expressed is the need to mark the channels. He stated that he feels more outside groups will be likely to use lake if the channels are marked. There was discussion on how to accomplish this. Bossier and Webster Police Jury representative stated that they would be glad to assist with signage. There are some residents that do not want spraying close to their property, and these people can fill out paperwork requesting no spraying.

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A representative of the Caddo Lake Institute spoke to the Task Force. The Caddo Lake Institute was developed in 1992 by Don Henley. The Caddo National Lake is a sister lake to Lake Bistineau and experience many of the same problems as Lake Bistineau. The two agencies will work together to share information and knowledge.

Trailblazer Biologist, Olivia Ward told the Task Force of upcoming community/ educational events. These events include Giant Salvinia education and Water Quality Workshops.

Upcoming Tentative Meeting Dates are: March 29, 2012; May 31, 2012; July 26, 2012; September 27, 2012; and November 15, 2012(if needed).

Audience Comments:

Mrs. Jackson asks about the cost of the chemicals for Private Application. Evan gave her approximate cost to LA Wildlife and Fisheries of \$48.00 per gal. and they use approximately 80 gal. Per day. Residents will have to purchase the chemicals privately, not through LA WF. This could be an expense of the Bistineau Task Force if funding is available.

Task Force Comments:

Mr. David Lowe stated that he had noticed an error in the Minutes after they were approved: David Fields was stated as affiliated with Soil and Water Conservation, but actually he is with the Department of Agriculture.

Mr. Walker expressed his appreciation to Ellzey and the Trailblazer Organization for their assistance and support.

Pete Camp addressed the issue of fallen trees and pipes that are in the lake- who is the responsible party for these issues. Evan stated that Corp of Engineers are own the lake bed and are considered responsible.

There being no further business to bring before the Task Force, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Ronda Carnahan, Secretary