

**20140722 - FOA Board meeting - 6:30 PM - Audubon****Attendees**

Board: Charles Caillouet, Willie Fontenot, Jim Delahoussaye and Charlie Fryling  
Advisors: Karen Westphal, Audubon; Rebecca Triche, LWF; Pam Caillouet, BMG; Jim Bergan, TNC; Don Haydel, ABP; Charles Reulet, ABP; April Newman, ABP;  
Guest - Bryan Piazza, TNC

**President Charlie Fryling opened the meeting at 06:35 PM**

Bryan Piazza was recognized and the discussion began.

**Special discussion - Bryan Piazza, TNC and Atchafalaya Floodway Restoration**

Bryan Piazza, Dir. of Freshwater & Marine Science, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), LA  
Jim Bergan, Dir. of Land and Water Protection Strategies, TNC, LA

Bryan talked to us about why he wrote the book and summarized some of his conclusions.

He talked about how his work fits into the goals and themes of The Nature Conservancy (TNC.)

...from the TNC web site( [www.nature.org](http://www.nature.org) ): “The Nature Conservancy is the leading conservation organization working around the world to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people.”

TNC believes that everything they do should be rooted in good science and employs hundreds of staff scientists to make sure that it is. They “pursue non-confrontational, pragmatic solutions to conservation challenges” [and] “partner with indigenous communities, businesses, governments, multilateral institutions, and other non-profits.” They claim more than 1 million members “who enable us to continue working on a scale that matters and implement solutions that endure.”

Bryan found from his initial research that there were many studies and reports on the Basin but not a comprehensive look at the scientific evidence on the natural history and human impact on the Basin.

He decided to put together a well documented reference book for students of the Basin and tried to make it readable by non-scientists as well as useful for scientists.

In his analysis of the Atchafalaya Basin Floodway System with Yvonne Allen of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, he identified priority conservation areas in the Floodway. Yvonne and Glenn Constant, also with USFWS were largely responsible for implementing the Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment System (NRIAS) for the LA Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Atchafalaya Basin Program (ABP), with web support from the US Geological Survey (USGS.)

Bryan intends to use NRIAS and the Audubon Hydraulic Model of the Floodway, developed with cooperation from the US Army Corps of Engineers and the Basin Program, to refine his conservation areas and to provide project-level prediction capability for judging the likely effects of restoration options in the Floodway.

His goal is to determine the areas with the highest probability of supporting natural or artificial (tree-planting) forest regeneration and identifying restoration projects with the best chance of raising that probability on large sections of public land, where projects are easiest to implement.

In his book, he has identified six general areas to start from and now expects to refine those areas and to evaluate approved (but not necessarily funded) ABP projects to see which ones hold the most promise. That information could be used to support funding of the most useful projects.

We discussed our resolution to be presented at the LA Wildlife Federation convention in August.

That resolution would support re-allocation of engineering and construction funding from stalled restoration projects (mostly from lack of landowner support) to land acquisition funding that will supplement other projects which are identified as high priority efforts. Bryan believes that we are on the right track and supports the effort. It is in line with his efforts to identify the high priority projects.

Bryan also indicated that TNC, working with several Grad students around the country, has evaluated the project selection and implementation process of the ABP, as defined in Act 606 of the 2008 LA Legislature. He thinks that the process is basically sound but needs to be “tweaked” slightly to keep it in line with the vision of the stakeholders in the Basin. He seemed to be saying that we need a blend of the original Basin Program process with the revised process after Act 606. The science-based analysis needs to be driven by a user-driven consensus and that the process needs to include a user control input to steer the system. That could result in selection of more effective projects, actual completion of those projects, and a wider base of support for future work. [Secretary’s note: I think we are going to like working closer with Bryan.]

## Old Business

### Reports

#### Secretary’s report - Charles

The Board approved the minutes from the April meeting.

(The Board did not meet in May and the June meeting did not produce a quorum, so most decisions were made via email.)

The Board reviewed email activity and affirmed the decisions made since April.

April 25: the new Earth Day Brochure/information sheet was approved

May 11: The Board agreed to skip the May meeting because Charlie out of town and nothing pressing was identified at that time.

June 9: The Secretary forwarded a Basinkeeper message about injection well permit action in St. Martin - personal action was suggested but no FOA action was taken.

June 26: Charlie Fryling suggested that the FOA fund part of one Boy Scout Swamp Base “Atchafalaya” and use social media fundraising ideas to complete the donation. Rebecca Triche of the LWF agreed to help us with the fundraising as part of her program of developing fund raising support for affiliate organizations.

June 30: The Board approved the resolution on ABP land purchases for the LWF Convention. The resolution was subsequently co-sponsored by the LWF Habitat Conservation and Management Committee.

July 2: The Secretary distributed a Resolution supporting monitoring of wood pellet production to be discussed at the July meeting.

#### Treasurer’s report - Charles

Donations: from Warren and Jodie Singer, and Aline Arceneaux - the Sec. sent acknowledgements

Payments:

to Immense Networks: \$179.40 for web hosting services;

to Name.Com: \$18 for domain name services (DNS)

Balance at the end of 2013 = \$1,449.70

As of 07/22/2014 = Regions: \$ 1,889.51 + PayPal: \$ 183.12 = Total: \$ 2,072.63 in all accounts

#### Web site update - Charles

FOA DNS registration was moved to Name.com after numerous disappointments from Network Solutions.

Hosting service was renewed with Immense Networks.

The webmaster access issues were cleared by installing a new internet router in the office. (no cost to FOA)

Prior minutes are now being posted after approval, starting with the Jan. 2014 meeting.

Monthly meetings are now referred to as just FOA meetings to reinforce the idea that they are open to all members.

#### Recent events

Support for a June Tour of Bayou Pigeon/Bayou Sorrel with Charles Roulet of ABP.

Support for a June Tour of Grand Isle with Chris Maculoso.

Both tour events were coordinated by Debra Credeur of the National Heritage Area at the request of the Lt Gov. for acclaimed artist Marlene Yu, who is planning a series on the Atchafalaya and the coast.

## ABP Update -

Don Haydel participated in the discussion with Bryan Piazza and has been working with TNC on their ideas. ABP is interested in all suggestions for improving the performance of the Program. Don is planning to meet with the DNR Secretary to provide us with comments on our resolution prior to the convention.

## Heritage Area update

The next Trace Commission meeting is July 23 and Bryan Piazza will present his findings on the Basin process for consideration by the Commission.

The Heritage Trail development RFP is still pending Division of Administration approval and will hopefully, soon be released.

## Other Reports

### National Park/Monument

There is a movement of certain western NGO's to increase the level of funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which is funded from oil and gas revenues

*LWCF funds should be available for Federal Land purchases associated with Refuges, Parks and National Forests, and cost shares for State projects.*

*There is interest in LA projects to appeal to Sen. Mary Landrieu for support.*

### Swamp Base Atchafalaya donation

The Board approved \$510 for half of one kayak and agreed to work with LWF on crowd-funding the rest, probably through Indie-go-go or another service selected by Rebecca Triche of LWF.

### LWF convention

FOA resolution

*The Sec. will coordinate support with ABP and relay the ABP position to the convention.*

*Don thinks that they probably have the necessary authority to reallocate funds but the decisions will still come from the Legislature and the Division of Administration.*

*The LWF Habitat Management and Conservation Committee is our co-sponsor.*

The Board agreed to Co-sponsor the pellet monitoring resolution with the Habitat committee.

*Comments from Willie and past Board member and forestry expert Richard Goyer supporting the resolution were presented by the Sec.*

## New Business

Plans for upcoming activities

Mississippi River Commission low-water-trip meeting

Now scheduled for August 21-22: boat trip and presentation

Sec. is to request space on the trip for whomever wants to go and work with the Pres. to prepare a presentation to the Mississippi River Commission.

## Upcoming Events

Trace Commission Mtg. - July 23

[Attakapa Opelousas Prairie Tribe Festival](#), July 26, 10 am

[Paddle at Two O'clock Bayou](#), July 26, 3 pm, Pack & Paddle

[Online Kayak Fishing Tournament](#): March 1 to October 15

Atchafalaya Basin Program Technical Advisory Group Meeting, Wednesday, July 30 at 9:30 am, LDNR Griffon Rm. 617 N. 3rd St., Baton Rouge

Atchafalaya Basin Program Research and Promotion Board Meeting, Thursday, July 31 at 9:30 am, LDNR Griffon Rm. 617 N. 3rd St., Baton Rouge

LWF Convention - August 15-16

## Next meeting place and time

8/26/2014 at Audubon at 6:30 PM

**adjourned at 9:05 PM**