



Image: Lane Lefort Photography

FOREWORD

The Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BTNEP) has been engaged in the protection and restoration of the 4.2 million acres of land and water that are at the heart of Louisiana's land loss crisis since 1990.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the State of Louisiana, and local partners formed a novel partnership at that time. The goal of BTNEP was to protect the estuary from further degradation and to undertake programs that would begin to check human-made damage that had already occurred to habitats throughout the estuary. That mission continues today. The base funding for this program is provided through Section 320 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) and a State match in funds.

A Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) was created to coordinate actions to address the needs of the estuary. This document is a revision of the original CCMP. This CCMP revision continues to work specifically to overcome the priority issues identified for the estuary by enlisting all of the effected stakeholders, establishing priorities, and synchronizing efforts. The priority problems addressed are: hydrologic modification, sediment reduction, habitat loss, eutrophication, pathogen contamination, toxic substances, and changes in living resources. The 36 action plans contained in this document work to directly address these problems as well as numerous institutional and societal factors which contribute to them.

The commitment of local people and their ongoing love of the land, water, culture, and each other have made the estuary's perils an international issue. What happens to this estuary and its people will showcase the adaptive capacity of communities living in a dynamic system.

As changes continue to manifest themselves in environmental exposures, BTNEP stands ready to address the issues through a science-based, stakeholder-led, consensus-driven plan of actions that uses a unique partnership approach focused on the estuary's rich cultural, economic, and natural resources.

Many opportunities exist to make positive changes to improve our ecosystem and human interaction with nature.

We invite you to join us in our efforts.