



*Image: Lane Lefort Photography*

# VALUE OF BTNEP MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE AND BTNEP PROGRAM STAFF

Importance of MC, BTNEP MC  
Member List, and NEP's Program  
Structure

## **The Management Conference**

Upon inclusion in the National Estuary Program, a diverse group of stakeholders was assembled including government, business, scientists, conservation organizations, agricultural interest, and individuals. This group, the BTNEP MC, ensures a place for the voice of all that live, work, and play in the BTES.

## **Importance of BTNEP MC**

The BTNEP MC, originally convened in 1990 to develop the CCMP, has been the catalyst for producing open and frank discussions about some of the most critical coastal management issues of the nation. The BTNEP MC has several functions. The primary function is to encourage and oversee implementing the CCMP by coordinating and integrating the CCMP actions among agencies and stakeholders. In addition, the BTNEP MC maintains an interchange with other similar federal, state,



*BTNEP MC members represent a diverse group of stakeholders. Image: Lane Lefort Photography*

and local planning efforts and reviews and modifies the implementation of the CCMP as conditions change over time. Finally, the BTNEP MC fosters and expands the use of participatory, voluntary, and incentive-based approaches to decision-making in the estuary.

The BTNEP MC is not intended to replace or duplicate existing state government. It is not a new agency or authority, and it is not a regulatory body. It is, however, an opportunity to maintain the ongoing dialogue on issues of mutual concern based on the proven structure of the BTNEP MC.

### **BTNEP MC Member Participation and List**

Under the umbrella of BTNEP, the stakeholders listed on the next page, collectively known as the BTNEP MC have volunteered tens of thousands of hours determining the directions the journey must take to safeguard the estuary for future generations.

The major stakeholders represented include industry, business and economic development, federal, state and local governments, academia, environmental organizations, and the general public.

As the CCMP continues to be implemented, it is critical that all interests are represented and that coordinated, integrated decision-making occurs. This process faces several challenges:

Estuarine resources are in demand by many different groups, resulting in multiple-user conflicts. It will always be a challenge to set and follow priorities for the estuary that protect not only natural resources, but also the rights of resource users and the lifestyles of the estuary's residents.

The "reaction and cure" approach to planning and management has proven to be economically, socially, and environmentally expensive. A new philosophy, forwarded by this CCMP, is to anticipate and prevent degradation in the planning stages of development to avoid problematic situations in the

### BTNEP MC Member List

- *American Sugar Cane League*
- *Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District*
- *Cajun Music Preservation Society*
- *Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana*
- *Coastal Conservation Association of LA*
- *Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority*
- *Commercial Fisheries*
- *Greater Lafourche Parish Port Commission*
- *Iberville Parish Government*
- *Jefferson Parish Government*
- *Lafourche Parish Government*
- *LA Association of Conservation District*
- *LA Association of Levee Boards*
- *LA Department of Ag & Forestry*
- *LA Department of Culture, Recreation & Tourism*
- *LA Department of Economic Development*
- *LA Department of Education*
- *LA Department of Environmental Quality*
- *LA Department of Health & Hospitals*
- *LA Department of Natural Resources*
- *LA Department of Wildlife & Fisheries*
- *LA Forestry Association*
- *LA Independent Oil & Gas Association*
- *LA Landowners Association*
- *LA Mid-Continent Oil & Gas Association*
- *LA Oil Spill Coordinators Office*
- *LA Science Teachers' Association*
- *LA Wildlife Federation*
- *LSU Ag Center & LA Sea Grant*
- *Lowlander Center*
- *LUMCON*
- *Nicholls State University*
- *NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)*
- *Plaquemines Parish Government*
- *Pointe Coupee Parish Government*
- *St. Charles Parish Government*
- *Sassafras Louisiana*
- *South Central Planning & Development Commission*
- *South Louisiana Economic Council*
- *South Louisiana Wetlands Discovery Center*
- *Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government*
- *The Nature Conservancy*
- *US Corps of Engineers*
- *US Coast Guard*
- *US Depart. Of Ag's Natural Resource Conservation Service (USDA/NRCS)*
- *US Environmental Protection Agency*
- *US Fish & Wildlife Service*
- *US Geological Survey (USGS/ CWPPRA)*
- *US National Park Service*

future. However, it will be a challenge to change an approach that has existed for so long and has been accepted by many as “the way to do it.”

Because of the connections between the BTNEP MC and various government agencies, economic interest, and the public, there may be resistance from those who have experienced frustration in dealing with agencies in the past.

At present, several large scale planning efforts underway at the federal, state, and local levels will affect the overall hydrology of the BTES. The BTNEP MC will continue to coordinate with these efforts to ensure that all ongoing activities support the goals of the CCMP. The BTNEP MC does not have the authority to overrule other federal or state restoration efforts such as Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA), Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA), or any other plans.

In summary, the BTNEP MC works on implementing and coordinating the CCMP in order to address the common interests of stakeholder groups including public and private interest groups.

## BTNEP Structure

In order to maintain engagement, the BTNEP MC meets quarterly to review and discuss various topics related to the BTNEP CCMP. All meetings are held within the estuary and are publicized and open to the public. BTNEP MC meetings use Robert’s Rules of Order for parliamentary procedures. A quorum of the BTNEP MC is a simple majority of the members or their designees. The vast majority of decisions are based on consensus.

APTs build upon the strength of stakeholders by continuing to increase the number and diversity of people involved in implementing the CCMP.

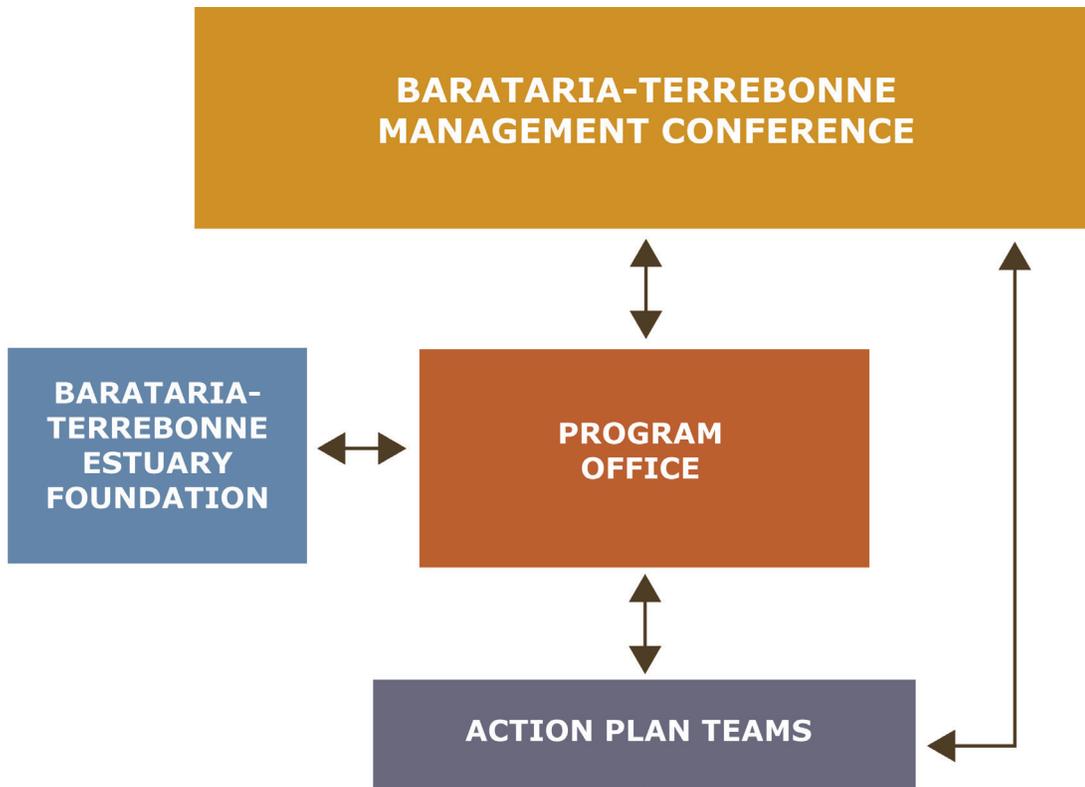
APTs consist of stakeholders with multidisciplinary interests and serve as a mechanism for citizen involvement and personal engagement in implementing the Action Plans.

Experts in specific fields or from interested agencies are members of the APTs as well as concerned residents and individuals.

Each APT member has an equal voice. APTs vary in membership and size but work as a cohesive group



*BTNEP Management Conference meets every quarter to discuss important topics regarding the estuary.  
Image: Lane Lefort Photography*



*Work flow for BTNEP MC.*

and serve as the “pool of resources” from which BTNEP will draw to help generate, guide, and review implementation projects related to Action Plans.

APTs guide and facilitate implementing the CCMP by recommending future projects and funding needs to the BTNEP MC.

APTs foster partnerships by providing an issue specific resource for other agencies or groups seeking expertise and public interest.

APTs develop the annual work plans that are submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the guidance of BTNEP Program Office (BTPO) staff.

The BTNEP MC formally adopted the APT organizational structure in 1999 in order to be more inclusive. The structure of APTs rather than committees has been a long standing successful way to engage the public in implementing the CCMP. The

bottom up approach of APTs, BTPO, and BTNEP MC has served the organization well.

### **BTNEP Program Office Structure**

BTNEP is currently overseen by the Board of Regents’ Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium (BoR/LUMCON). The State of Louisiana General Fund provides a match for the program office and BoR/LUMCON acts as the host fiscal agent for the program. Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium (LUMCON) is headquartered in Cocodrie, LA. The BTNEP MC may suggest a different host agency should the need arise.

BTNEP currently has a director, deputy director, administrative staff, scientific staff, education staff, and outreach staff positions. BTNEP also hires student interns from Nicholls to assist staff with various duties.

The director reports directly to the BTNEP MC on

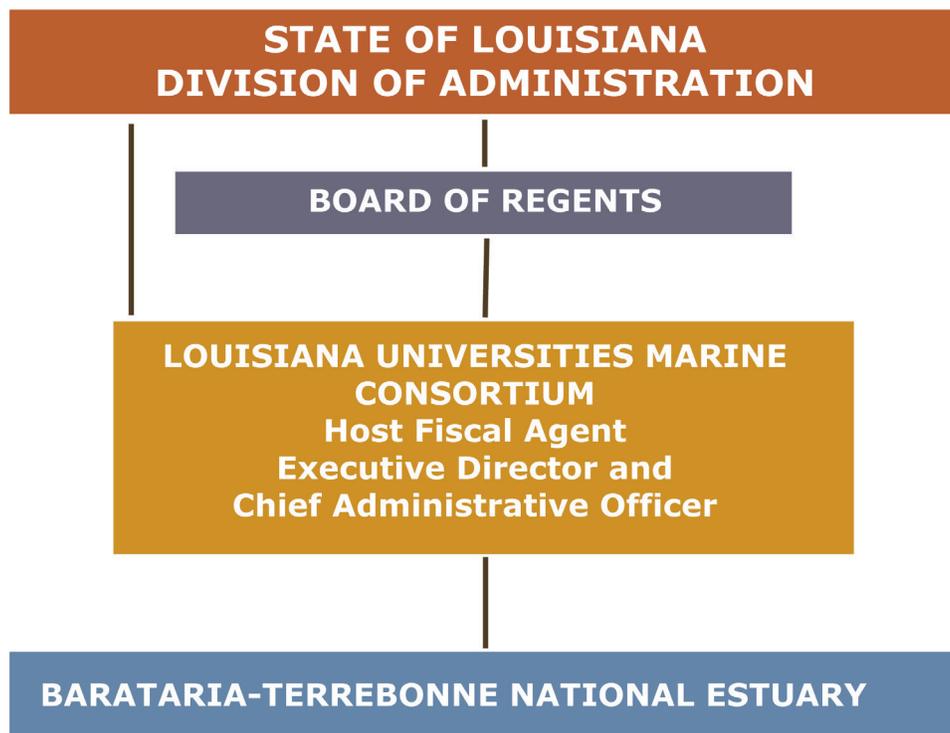
all matters concerning implementing the CCMP and appropriate matters concerning the program and MC. The director is responsible for the orderly, efficient, and effective administration and operation of the office including personnel. The director also represents the BTNEP MC at functions requiring BTNEP attendance and participation. Additionally, budget and financial matters including the funding of program's operation and implementation of the CCMP are required duties of the director.

The deputy director is the advisor to the director and staff on fiscal, technical, and personnel matters. In the absence of the director, the deputy director has signatory authority on all contracts and invoices related to BTNEP. The deputy director has a leadership role among the technical/scientific, administrative, education, and outreach staff. This position requires maintaining a close working relationship with local, state, and federal agencies, other scientists, and special interest groups; monitoring individual projects performed by the BTNEP staff; providing

information to BTNEP staff regarding funding remaining for projects, and supporting staff grant and contract management. This position also serves as the liaison between the EPA and LUMCON fiscal staff.

The administrative staff is usually the first contact between the BTPO and the general public, the BTNEP MC members, and other local, state, national, and international officials. Administrative staff is expected to be generally familiar with past and present projects and products of BTNEP and is also expected to be knowledgeable on a very broad range of administrative matters related to purchasing, payroll, property control, meeting planning, and database management.

The scientific staff provides scientific/technical support for the day-to-day management of BTNEP in his or her area of expertise. Work requires maintaining a close working relationship with the BTNEP MC and with the assigned APTs. It also requires maintaining



*BTNEP Program structure.*



*BTNEP staff. Image: Lane Lefort Photography*

a close working relationship with local, state, and federal agencies and special interest groups; monitoring individual research projects; assessing data; developing technical reports; and supporting grant and contract management. Scientific staff is expected to develop, enhance, and promote various scientific projects that implement the CCMP.

Education staff act as the “bridge” between BTNEP and the K-12, university education sectors and informal educators. The education staff modifies or reformats and presents the technical information produced by the BTNEP scientific staff for use by students, educators, and informal educators. The education staff are knowledgeable on a broad range of scientific matters related to habitat restoration, living resources, and water quality issues and are able to condense that knowledge into a form that is easily understood by teachers and their students.

The education staff works with other educational and outreach programs around the country, including the other 27 NEPs, EPA, and various national education organizations and is also involved in a number of general public outreach activities and projects.

Outreach staff duties include creating public support and public advocacy for environmental issues in BTNEP and CCMP Action Plans. Staff work with all venues to establish BTNEP as a source of factual information on the problems that threaten the estuary and its communities. Outreach staff promote program accomplishments with the objective of establishing BTNEP and the program staff as a nationally supported, community-led group representing a broad spectrum of partners with a mission of implementing a state and federally approved restoration plan.

BTPO is physically located on the Nicholls campus



*BTNEP Staff and Management Conference members mingle and share ideas before each quarterly meeting.  
Image: Lane Lefort Photography.*

in Thibodaux, LA. BTNEP and Nicholls have Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with regard to both office space and for BTNEP's Field Operations Center located on the Nicholls farm just south of campus. BTNEP Field Operations Center

houses most of the capital assets used in the field including boats, trailers, tractor, four-wheelers, greenhouse, and shade house.

# BTNEP Volunteer Programs



BTNEP's 2016 Derelict Crab Trap Rodeo removed more than

**1,000**

abandoned derelict crab traps that increased mortality of blue crabs and other species as well as created navigational hazards

- BTNEP hosts
- **25 to 30**
- volunteer events
- a year in communication
- with BTNEP's
- Native Plant Program



- **Annually,**
- BTNEP coordinates
- **500-800**
- **VOLUNTEERS**
- to participate in
- native vegetation
- **plantings**
- **as well as**
- **coastal**
- **and inland**
- debris cleanups



BTNEP's 2016 Lake Fields Cleanup event removed close to **EIGHT TONS** of trash and debris from the Lake Fields area near Lockport, LA



Designed by: Hannah Fulton & Phyllis Lear