





# PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION AND COORDINATED PLANNING

Management Conference, BTNEP  
Program Office, Points-of-Contact,  
Governmental Affairs, Emergency  
Response, and Communication of  
Rules

The Program Implementation Action Plans are the most critical parts to the successful implementation of the CCMP; without them, the program would not exist.

The centerpiece of this set of plans is the continuation of the BTNEP MC. The BTNEP MC will be the entity through which the CCMP is implemented, monitored, coordinated, and evaluated. Through its diverse membership of all stakeholder groups, the BTNEP MC will be the main avenue for stakeholder involvement in the estuary's management efforts. Finally, through its organizational structure, management agreements, and decision-making policies, the BTNEP MC represents a meaningful commitment of its membership to ensure that the CCMP is implemented. Thus, the BTNEP MC truly epitomizes the BTNEP goal: maintain multi-level, long-term, comprehensive watershed planning.

From the beginning of the BTNEP planning process, BTNEP MC members realized that Program Implementation and Coordinated Planning would be a critical and integral part of the CCMP. This

# CATEGORY 1

document reflects this idea in many ways. Clearly, the most important action in this regard is the continuation of the BTNEP MC as described above. By bringing all stakeholder groups together in a single management entity, a coordinated planning effort is ensured. Supporting this idea is the BTNEP MC's adoption of a decision-making and conflict-resolution methodology, expressed in the BTNEP goal, forge common ground solutions to estuarine problems, that is inclusive, objective, and reflective of the diverse interests which exist in the BTES and depend upon its resources.

The collective input of the BTNEP MC and the CCMP revision teams provide several plans to ensure coordinated, comprehensive, and effective management of the BTES. These plans work to establish a mechanism for coordination among government agencies and to create a strong framework for comprehensive planning within the BTES.

## PI-1 Barataria-Terrebonne Management Conference

### OBJECTIVES

- To provide oversight of CCMP implementation
- To provide direction to the Barataria-Terrebonne Program Office (BTPO)
- To ensure that all stakeholders have the opportunity for input into implementing the CCMP

- To facilitate coordinated management of the BTES

### BACKGROUND/MAJOR ISSUES

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. Since its inception, the BTNEP MC has made a commitment to fairness and has fostered a spirit of trust and cooperation among its members and the communities it serves. A founding principal of the BTNEP MC has been a consensus-based form of decision-making which has gained the respect and commitment of the members and the public.

BTNEP successfully brought together a diverse group of stakeholders to draft and revise a CCMP for the BTES. Through this process, decisions have been made using the expertise and experience of interdisciplinary groups and multiple stakeholders. As the CCMP is implemented, it is critical that similar mechanisms continue to be employed in order to require that all interests are represented and that coordinated, integrated, common ground decision-making continues.

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

At present, several large scale planning and restoration efforts are underway at the federal, state and local levels which will affect the BTES. The BTNEP MC will continue to follow and coordinate



*BTNEP Management Conference. Image: Lane Lefort Photography*

with these efforts to ensure that all ongoing activities support the goals of the CCMP.

## DESCRIPTION

The BTNEP MC will continue to bring together a diverse group of stakeholders to ensure an ongoing affirmation and implementation of the shared vision as established in the CCMP. As such, the BTNEP MC will enable a coordinated, BTES-wide approach to funding, planning, and ongoing monitoring of BTES management to provide an important mechanism for

making sound decisions and appropriate revisions to the CCMP as the need arises. In addition, the BTNEP MC provides a forum for ongoing formal communication and dialogue among private and public interests. Finally, the BTNEP MC will make available the diverse expertise and resources of MC members and their constituencies in moving the CCMP implementation forward.

The BTNEPMC 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 provides



an opportunity to maintain the ongoing dialogue related to the issues of mutual concern based on the proven structure of the BTNEP MC. The makeup of the BTNEP MC includes diverse representation of BTES interests. The BTNEP MC consists of between 40 to 50 members selected to represent the interests of the major stakeholders in the BTES. Some of the major stakeholders to be represented include industry, business and economic development; federal, state, and local governments; academia, environmental, and educational organizations; and the general public.

The BTNEP MC organizational structure could be refined as it deems necessary. Because of the large size of the BTNEP MC, subcommittees could be formed to address specific issues. In order to maintain a broad-based decision-making process as well as encourage widespread involvement, quarterly meetings of the full BTNEP MC will be held with more frequent meetings of various committees and subcommittees if necessary. All interested stakeholders, the general public, and media are welcomed and encouraged to attend these meetings.

To facilitate the administrative and fiscal responsibilities associated with implementing the CCMP, the BTPO will provide support services as requested by the BTNEP MC. For additional details about this office, please refer to P1-2 Barataria-Terrebonne Program Office.

The BTNEP MC adopted operational procedures in 2000. The operational procedures identify the role of the BTNEP MC, BTNEP MC membership, BTNEP MC Officers, Program Director, staff, BTNEP MC meetings, conflicts of interest disclosures, media relationships, and adoption and amendment of procedures.

## **LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

The BTNEP MC will be responsible for its own implementation. BTNEP MC members will select an executive committee that may include a chairman,

co-chair, secretary, and other necessary positions. With BTPO support and coordination, all BTNEP MC members will implement CCMP Action Plans.

The EPA will provide guidance to the BTNEP MC. An EPA representative will attend all full BTNEP MC meetings. The EPA will annually review data collected work products, and deliverables of the BTNEP MC as part of this Action Plan.

The BTPO will provide support to the BTNEP MC. As requested by the BTNEP MC, the BTPO will perform administrative functions related to the BTNEP MC.

## **TIMELINES AND MILESTONES**

The BTNEP MC will host quarterly meetings for all members. Attendance records will be reviewed annually during the first calendar quarter and requests for alternate or replacement members will be made to organizations that have not attended at least two meetings in the previous calendar year. Executive board positions will be for a term of two years beginning on the first day of the calendar year. Elections for executive board positions will be held during the 3rd quarter of the calendar year.

## **POSSIBLE RANGE OF COSTS AND SOURCES OF FUNDING**

Existing member organization budgets will cover participation in BTNEP MC activities including full committee meetings and subcommittee meetings. The BTPO staff will support the BTNEP MC as outlined in P1-2 Barataria-Terrebonne Program Office.

## **PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

Performance measures include:

- four BTNEP MC annual meetings.
- quarterly BTNEP MC meeting.
- various reports to EPA about BTNEP MC and BTPO activities.





*BTNEP Management Conference. Image: Lane Lefort Photography*

## Data Gathered

- BTNEP MC meeting agendas
- BTNEP MC meeting presentations
- EPA reports as required
- annual work plans and reports to EPA
- annual reports to State as directed

## Monitoring

**Parties Responsible:** The BTPO will be responsible for all reporting parameters.

**Timetable for Gathering Data:** Data will be collected annually, quarterly, and/or as requested by EPA, BTNEP MC, and the State.

**How Data is Shared:** All materials are shared through the web either on the BTNEP.org site or through EPA or State of Louisiana.

**Possible Data Gaps:** The BTPO and/or the BTNEP MC will regularly evaluate data to determine any possible data gaps.

**Additional Funding Needed:** Yes, as the BTPO evolves, additional funding may be required.

## PI-2 Barataria-Terrebonne Program Office

### OBJECTIVE

- To provide administrative and logistical support to the BTNEP MC by maintaining a BTPO with an active full-time staff

### BACKGROUND/MAJOR ISSUES

This action would continue the operation of the BTPO similar to the existing one. The BTPO would be tasked with a number of responsibilities all of



which would directly relate to implementing the CCMP. The first group of responsibilities would be the administrative duties necessary to conduct BTNEP MC meetings. Included would be developing detailed agendas, notifying participants, preparing meeting minutes, and following up on activities and duties assigned at the meetings.

Other major responsibilities are to assume the lead role in developing Memorandums of Agreement (MOA) with various government agencies and others to implement CCMP actions and to assist the various responsible agencies with respect to implementing specific Action Plans. The BTPO would be accountable to BTNEP MC for CCMP implementation matters and to the fiscal agency for BTPO administration and personnel concerns.

The current configuration of the BTPO has worked well. For the CCMP to be implemented, it is recognized that personnel must be assigned to accomplish the administrative and logistical work necessary to actually continue the implementation process and to support the ongoing BTNEP MC. The BTPO will be responsible for developing and executing numerous projects to gather scientific information, to educate the public about various issues, and to foster support from stakeholders. As BTPO responsibilities change over time, the size and configuration of the BTPO should be changed to meet those responsibilities.

## DESCRIPTION

The BTPO will provide personnel dedicated to working specifically on implementing the CCMP. Without having this specifically dedicated staff, the likelihood of the BTNEP MC continuing to function as it currently does and having the momentum to implement the CCMP could be jeopardized. By having staff in a BTPO, all of the stakeholders and the agencies responsible for the CCMP would be assured that personnel would be available to assist with Action Plans to monitor progress with respect to implementing the CCMP.

The BTPO would continue to operate with existing

Louisiana State civil service positions under a fiscal agency and/or with detailed personnel from other agencies for as long as the BTNEP MC deems necessary. As staffing and funding needs change in the future, the BTPO configuration could be altered.

## LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The BTNEP MC is responsible for directing the work of the BTPO. A state agency or non-profit organization can act as the fiscal agency for BTPO administration and personnel concerns. This organization would be responsible for the necessary administrative support to continue the operations of the BTPO by providing staff positions and benefits. It would also assure the State matching funds for any federal grants which fiscal agent is LUMCON under the Louisiana Board of Regents (BoR). In the future, the BTPO could be housed under other agencies or organizations as it has been in the past.

## TIMELINES AND MILESTONES

The BTPO will:

- coordinate four BTNEP MC annual meetings. Developing detailed agendas, notifying participants, preparing meeting minutes, and following up on activities and duties assigned at the meetings would be included.
- update the BTNEP MC on program activities at each BTNEP MC meeting.
- prepare an annual work plan to be approved by the BTNEP MC.
- implement specific Action Plans as assigned by the BTNEP MC. (This implementation may come from annual work plans and other partnering opportunities.)
- assume the lead role in developing MOAs with various government agencies and others to implement CCMP actions and to assist the various responsible agencies with respect to



implementing specific Action Plans.

- provide personnel salaries, benefits, and work space dedicated to working specifically on implementing the CCMP. The BTPO will work with the state agency that acts as the fiscal agent for administrative and personnel matters.
- maintain all equipment and state assets associated with the BTPO.

## POSSIBLE RANGE OF COSTS AND SOURCES OF FUNDING

Costs will be associated with the level of effort that the BTNEP MC deems necessary to accomplish above described activities. Costs will include personnel

salary and fringe benefits, office space, equipment, operating services, supplies, and Action Plan project costs. These costs will vary based on implementation schedules.

The EPA provides annual funding each year to the NEP. The State is committed to providing a dollar for dollar match to the annual funding. The Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary Foundation (BTEF) may also be a source of funding for the BTPO. Outside grants may also be used a source of funding for the BTPO.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance measures include:

- four BTNEP MC annual meetings.



*BTNEP staff member works closely with DEQ BTNEP MC members on water quality improvements.  
Image: Lane Lefort Photography*



- quarterly updates to the BTNEP MC on program activities at each BTNEP MC meeting.
- annual work plan to be approved by the BTNEP MC and EPA.
- various reports to EPA about BTPO activities.
- Annual Report to EPA with personnel salaries, benefits, and work space dedicated to working specifically on implementing the CCMP.
- report to State annually on all equipment and State assets associated with the BTPO.
- report to the State on Performance Indicators as required.

## Data Gathered

- BTNEP MC meeting agendas
- BTNEP MC meeting presentations
- annual work plan outputs
- EPA reports as required
- annual work plans and reports to EPA
- annual reports to State as directed

## Monitoring

**Parties Responsible:** The BTPO will be responsible for all reporting parameters.

**Timetable for Gathering Data:** Data will be gathered annually, quarterly, and/or as requested by EPA, BTNEP MC, and the State.

**How Data is Shared:** All materials are shared through the web either on the BTNEP.org site or through EPA or State of Louisiana.

**Possible Data Gaps:** The BTPO and/or the BTNEP MC will regularly evaluate data to determine if possible data gaps exist.

**Additional Funding Needed:** Yes, as the BTPO

evolves, additional funding may be required.

## PI-3 Maintain Points-of-Contact for the State of Louisiana

### OBJECTIVES

- To maintain Points-of-Contact for the State of Louisiana with respect to implementing the CCMP
- To maintain appropriate organizational relations with the host fiscal agency
- To continue to maintain professional associations with many State of Louisiana agencies that provide a mechanism for implementing the CCMP

### BACKGROUND/MAJOR ISSUES

As CCMP implementation continues, it is important that the Louisiana Governor's Office of Coastal Activities be designated as a primary Point-of-Contact for the State of Louisiana. It would also seem appropriate that the BoR through LUMCON will continue in its role as the responsible agency for fiscal and administrative oversight of BTNEP. LUMCON provides fiscal administrative support for the BTPO support functions and would continue to receive any additional EPA grant funds.

Additionally, the BTPO on behalf of the BTNEP MC is encouraged to maintain and build relationships with other State of Louisiana agencies who are BTNEP MC members and who are instrumental in implementing the CCMP. Estuarine resources are in demand by many different groups which results in multiple-user conflicts. By maintaining and building professional associations, the BTPO and BTNEP MC may help residents better protect the BTE's natural resources, the rights of resource users, and the unique lifestyles of the BTES.



*BTNEP staff member working with LDWF on Marine Debris Removal. Image: Lane Lefort Photography*

## DESCRIPTION

The Governor's Office of Coastal Activities will be designated as the Point-of-Contact for State of Louisiana wetlands policy-related issues and activities related to implementing the CCMP. This may include help in monitoring, seeking funding, and helping the public to understand restoration goals, objectives, and trade-offs.

The BoR through LUMCON will be designated and continue in its role as the responsible agency for fiscal and administrative oversight of BTNEP. This includes the oversight of the operation of the BTPO. BoR-LUMCON will be responsible for seeking funding on the state level through the legislative process for State financial support of BTNEP. LUMCON will also be the financial overseer and fiscal agent for all current and potential EPA awards. This includes the fiscal and administrative oversight of existing awards and potential awards provided by private, local, state,

and federal grant funds.

The BTPO will also build, maintain, and seek professional interactions and connections with other state agencies that have influence on the health of the BTES and implementing the CCMP.

## LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The BTPO and BTNEP MC will maintain and improve contacts with the State of Louisiana. The BTPO staff will be responsible for the day-to-day interactions, and BTNEP MC members will support maintaining relationships that help with implementing the CCMP.

If needed, the BTNEP MC members can select an executive committee that may include a chairman, co-chair, secretary, and other necessary positions to aid in implementing this Action Plan with support and coordination provided by the BTPO.





## TIMELINES AND MILESTONES

The BTPO will continue to build on long standing relationships with state agencies. The BTPO staff will report to BTNEP MC at its quarterly meetings about activities as needed.

## POSSIBLE RANGE OF COSTS AND SOURCES OF FUNDING

Existing BTNEP budgets will cover participation in activities including meetings. The BTNEP MC will support the BTPO staff.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance measures include:

- four BTNEP MC annual meetings.
- various reports to EPA about BTNEP MC and BTPO activities.

## Data Gathered

- BTNEP MC meeting agendas
- BTNEP MC meeting presentations

- EPA reports as required
- annual work plans and reports to EPA
- annual reports to the State as directed
- BTNEP work products

## Monitoring

**Parties Responsible:** The BTPO will be responsible for all reporting parameters.

**Timetable for Gathering Data:** Data will be collected annually, quarterly, and/or as requested by EPA, BTNEP MC, and the State.

**How Data is Shared:** All materials are shared through the web either on the BTNEP.org site or through EPA or State of Louisiana.

**Possible Data Gaps:** The BTPO and/or the BTNEP MC will regularly evaluate data to determine if possible data gaps exist.

**Additional Funding Needed:** Yes, as the BTPO evolves, additional funding may be required.

## CP-1 Governmental Affairs and Education

## OBJECTIVES

- To keep federal, state, and local government officials and elected and appointed officials informed as to the critical issues of the BTES
- To secure continued awareness of the need for implementing the CCMP
- To provide sufficient information to Louisiana's Congressional Delegation on the national significance of the BTES

## BACKGROUND/MAJOR ISSUES

Continued implementation of the CCMP is supported by the enactment of legislation and appropriation of funding that benefit the estuarine system. This requires an ongoing collaboration among partners in public and private sectors as well as Non-governmental Organizations (NGO) and institutional partners. Concise, factual information must be provided to our elected and appointed leadership regarding the true value of the estuarine system as identified by the economic growth portion of the revised CCMP and the benefits it provides to the State and the nation. In turn, our leadership will be able to respond to the questions and concerns of their constituencies with timely and accurate information concerning the actions and activities reflected in the CCMP.

## DESCRIPTION

Activities herein are designed to support the ongoing efforts to educate federal, state, and local leaders regarding the challenges facing the BTES, to foster a sense of stewardship for our natural resources, to encourage support for the policies and actions set forth by the CCMP, and to provide the educational and informational tools required to address the concerns of the diverse constituencies within the BTES. Specifically, this plan proposes:

1. an annual town-meeting style event with participants who include federal, state, and local elected and appointed officials and members of the BTNEP MC and BTPO staff as well as friends of the BTES.
2. ongoing meetings with government officials with regard to issues of immediate concern to the BTES.
3. educational events such as boat tours and project site visits designed to provide government officials a first-hand experience with the issues and challenges facing the BTES as well as possible solutions.

4. the establishment of a BTES Government Affairs Advisory Workgroup made up of BTNEP MC members and leadership of the BTEF who are able to make informational contacts with elected and appointed leadership.
5. collaboration with existing legislative caucuses as well as local, regional, and national organizations in order to expand the awareness of estuarine issues and value of implementing the CCMP.

Actions identified in this plan shall occur in locations throughout the BTES. In addition, meetings and educational events may be expected to occur at other designated locations as necessary to adequately engage and participate in state, regional, and national conferences and meetings addressing issues of concern to the BTES and BTNEP.

## LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

All educational and informational materials developed, produced, and distributed through this Action Plan will be the responsibility of the BTPO. With support of the BTNEP MC, the BTPO will coordinate and implement meetings, briefings, project site visits, and other events that are educational and informational in nature. The BTEF with the support of other members of the BTNEP MC may lead other activities that may be required to secure adequate funding sources to implement the CCMP.

## TIMELINES AND MILESTONES

Activities identified within this Action Plan are mostly ongoing. The town-meeting style event may be conducted on an annual basis. A BTES Governmental Affairs Advisory Workgroup will be established within two years.

## POSSIBLE RANGE OF COSTS AND SOURCES OF FUNDING

Costs associated with this action may include but are not limited to staff time, travel, dues for membership





United States Capitol building. Image: <https://www.aoc.gov/capitol-buildings/about-us-capitol-building>

in associations and organizations with similar goals and interests, conference fees, the development, production, and distribution of educational and informational materials, and the implementation of an annual town-hall style event. Costs incurred may range from \$25,000 to \$75,000 per year.

Funding for developing, producing, and distributing educational and informational materials may be made available through the BTPO budget or the BTEF budget as well as members of the BTNEP MC in addition to direct and indirect support from business, civic, and community organizations.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURE

Performance measure includes:

- list of meetings, briefings, and/or events as reported on BTNEP MC quarterly agendas

## Data Gathered

- number of events, communications, and/or briefings
- number of attendees at events
- number of meetings held by the Governmental Affairs Workgroup

## Monitoring

**Parties Responsible:** The BTPO will be responsible for all reporting parameters.

**Timetable for Gathering Data:** Data will be gathered annually and/or as requested by EPA, BTNEP MC, BTEF and/or the State.

**How Data is Shared:** report to EPA

**Possible Data Gaps:** None identified at this time.

**Additional Funding Needed:** If available, it may be useful.

## CP-2 Emergency Response, Recovery, and Resiliency

### OBJECTIVE

To coordinate diverse activities across other Action Plans in the event of disaster response, recovery, and resilience.

### BACKGROUND/MAJOR ISSUES

As a result of various hurricanes, oil spills, major rain events, and other catastrophic events that have either occurred in the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary (BTNE) or adjacent to the system but had a significant effect on the area or its stakeholders, the BTNEP MC and the BTPO have found themselves engaged in one way or another in Emergency/Disaster Response, Recovery, and Community Resilience

throughout the existence of the BTPO. These events and efforts by the BTPO, although technically not a part of the previous CCMP, have been valuable for the communities in the BTES. BTNEP MC members as well as BTNEP staff and the BTEF board members played roles in every aspect of mitigating the effects those events had on the BTES, BTES people, and its stakeholders. A short list of example roles that BTNEP has served before, during, and after these extreme events follows.

- raised awareness of the landscape and how people interact within it
- provided a conduit for information sharing
- coordinated between agencies and stakeholders for volunteers
- served as BTES subject matter experts
- hosted various supply drives

### DESCRIPTION

Generally, Action Plans of the CCMP serve as guides for BTNEP to work on throughout the year



*Flags of the U.S.A. and Louisiana on the desk of a state legislator. Image: <https://twitter.com/lalegis>*





*Shrimp boat at dock. Image: Lane Lefort Photography*

and the life of the CCMP with milestones, costs, and performance measures to meet. The intent of this Action Plan varies from the traditional Action Plans in that it will serve only as a guide to the BTPO in the event of an extreme event that may result from meteorological, geological, man-made, or other source. When these events occur within the BTES, local, state, and federal agencies activate to fulfill emergency operations roles which support the Federal Emergency Management System (EMIS). Some of these agencies' key personnel and functions are represented by BTNEP MC members; however, some are not. This Action Plan, when needed, will serve as a way to account for the value added by the BTNEP staffs' ability and flexibility to fill in the gaps

the BTNEP MC may not.

This Action Plan will take place throughout the BTNE and may take place in areas adjacent to the BTNE as such areas may impact the BTES.

## **LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

In coordination with the BTNEP MC and the BTEF, the BTPO will serve as the lead agency.

## **TIMELINES AND MILESTONES**

The timelines and milestones will be dependent and enacted upon when an extreme event takes place.

## POSSIBLE RANGE OF COSTS AND SOURCES OF FUNDING

Due to the intent of this Action Plan and the way that it will be used and carried out, cost and sources of funding will be determined at the time of occurrence. Frequently, the BTEF has acted as a fiduciary manager to facilitate a quick response and to address pressing needs.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURE

Performance measure will include:

- a summary list of activities provided on quarterly

BTNEP MC agendas

## Data Gathered

- summary of activities

## Monitoring

**Parties Responsible:** BTPO

**Timetable for Gathering Data:** unknown

**How Data is Shared:** via websites

**Possible Data Gaps:** none identified

**Additional Funding Needed:** yes, as available



*Oil skimmers at work. Image: Doug Helton, NOAA/NOS/ORR.*



## CP-3 Communication of Rules, Regulations, and Guidelines

### OBJECTIVES

- To ensure that all stakeholders are involved in the state and federal (where applicable) legislative and regulatory process related to CCMP Action Plans
- To facilitate the education and communication of regulatory actions that will affect BTES stakeholders related to CCMP Action Plans
- To communicate stakeholders' needs to elected and appointed officials in response to the development of rules, regulations, and guidelines related to CCMP Action Plans

### BACKGROUND/MAJOR ISSUES

Rules, regulations, and guidelines at all levels of government affect the stakeholders in the BTES. Although procedural guidelines may include public comment and public hearing requirements, the system is complicated and multi-leveled. At the state level, changes can occur through two major processes: the legislative process through which statutory changes are made in the law and the regulatory process through which agencies are mandated to write regulations to implement the statutes.

Stakeholders have the opportunity to get involved in the rulemaking process at several levels but oftentimes are not aware of changes until the process is completed and the rules or regulations have been created or altered. BTNEP MC can be a mechanism to inform and educate the public on such issues. Government officials coordinating changes to laws or rules also need information and education. BTNEP MC should bring issues to officials with the perspective of the BTES stakeholders' needs.

Public participation begins at commission meetings, task force meetings, and board meetings. These

entities are organized through legislation as expert panels or as stakeholders to give input on legislation and policy. A member of the BTNEP MC should attend meetings of interest. These meetings are required to meet the standards of the Louisiana Open Meeting Law (R.S. 42:11 through 28) and the State Boards and Commissions requirements (R.S. 49:1301 through 1306) that require information be made available to the public. Most meetings allow public comment and may allow additions to the agenda.

The State of Louisiana Administrative Procedures Act and the Federal Administrative Procedures Act as well as a number of other statutory and constitutional provisions, such as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Article 9 of the Louisiana Constitution, regulate the process for amending or creating legislation and rules. Generally, these laws require that government regulations and actions under those regulations be based on some kind of record that demonstrates that the agency considered enough factors to support a finding and that it did not act arbitrarily and capriciously. To ensure an opportunity for the public to express its opinion, the two Administrative Procedures Acts ordinarily require that notice of draft regulations or proposed actions under those regulations, such as the consideration of permits, be published and that the public be given an opportunity to comment.

One of the basic tenets of BTNEP is that if those individuals and groups affected by the laws and regulations could have a voice in the creation and change in those laws and regulations, not just in the review process, a greater appreciation of the benefits of regulations and a higher incidence of voluntary compliance would be maintained.

Increasing stakeholder involvement in the regulatory process also encourages the adoption of regulations that are based on real needs; public empowerment fosters an ownership of regulations and increases the may result in new ideas for protecting the resources of the BTES.



*BTNEP Management Conference meeting. Image: BTNEP*

Making the officials aware of the community needs as a whole, not just one perspective, is important for fair and balanced decision making.

## DESCRIPTION

This action will maintain the process the BTNEP MC uses to schedule public meetings, alert public officials, and facilitate communication during and after the creation of regulations or legislative acts. This action will continue to complement and reinforce the role of the BTNEP MC by establishing a process which significantly expands public dialogue and involvement in creating and enforcing the various rules, regulations, and guidelines which impact the BTES. This action will also provide needed communication from BTES stakeholders to public officials.

## LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The BTNEP MC will serve as the lead implementer as it will have a diverse representation from across the BTES and can establish a subcommittee on this

issue should the need arise. The BTNEP MC will also be able to bring in expertise and stakeholders as needed to guide and support this action.

Additionally, all relevant agencies, particularly those directly responsible for creating and enforcing regulations, and interest groups, particularly those representing the regulated community, will be involved in a supporting role.

## TIMELINES AND MILESTONES

The BTNEP MC may:

- provide information to the public at BTNEP MC meetings about rules, regulations, and guidelines.
- designate a subcommittee to produce a report including a study of existing public involvement mechanisms, identification of groups involved in the process, and an analysis of the prior effects of key regulations and initial plan recommendations.
- hold special meetings to develop innovative mechanisms for public involvement.



- adopt the recommended practices to the extent practicable.
- work with the State Legislature to create formal recommendations for legislation, if necessary, reflecting the recommendations of the BTNEP MC (ongoing).
- continue review and revision of public involvement mechanisms aiming to further integrate them into BTES management.
- further educate agencies and stakeholders of the need for increased involvement and the available mechanisms.
- publish annual reports that update the progress of this action.

## POSSIBLE RANGE OF COSTS AND SOURCES OF FUNDING

Costs will be associated with the level of effort that the BTNEP MC deems necessary to accomplish the above described activities. Costs might include contractor personnel salary and fringe benefits, office space, equipment, operating services, and supplies should BTNEP MC desire. The EPA provides annual funding each year to the NEP. The State is committed to providing a dollar for dollar match to the annual funding. The BTEF may also be a source of funding for the BTPO. Outside grants may be used a source of funding.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance measures include:

- information sharing at any one of the four annual BTNEP MC meetings.
- quarterly updates on activities to the stakeholders at related BTNEP MC meetings.
- various reports to EPA about BTPO activities.
- reports to the State on Performance Indicators as required related to sharing public information

about rules, regulations, and guidelines.

## Data Gathered

- BTNEP MC meeting agendas
- BTNEP MC meeting presentation
- EPA reports as required
- annual reports to State as directed

## Monitoring

**Parties Responsible:** The BTPO will be responsible for all reporting parameters.

**Timetable for Gathering Data:** Data will be gathered annually, quarterly, and/or as requested by EPA. All materials are shared through the web either on the BTNEP.org site or through EPA or State of Louisiana.

**Possible Data Gaps:** The BTPO and/or the BTNEP MC will regularly evaluate data to determine possible data gaps.

**Additional Funding Needed:** Additional funding needs are unknown at this time.

# ELMER'S ISLAND WILDLIFE REFUGE REGULATIONS



Use of the refuge will be permitted from  
**30 minutes before official sunrise  
to 30 minutes after official sunset.**  
*This includes any land across routes to the refuge.*



**NO**  
•glass bottles  
•glass drink  
containers  
•or other glass  
products

**NO PERSON**  
shall enter onto or be on the  
**GROUND OF THE REFUGE**  
during a  
**RESTRICTED ACCESS  
PERIOD**

**NO PERSON  
SHALL** commercially fish, conduct any  
guiding service, hunt, pursue, kill,  
molest or intentionally disturb any  
type of wildlife on the refuge,  
EXCEPT for the legal recreational  
harvest of living aquatic resources.

No person shall be in  
**AREAS MARKED AS  
RESTRICTED**  
by signs posted by LDWF

## NO MOTORIZED VEHICLES PERMITTED

**Non-consumptive users  
NEED NO PERMITS**  
of any kind for  
beachcombing, picnicking, swimming, etc.



Anyone **16+ years** fishing  
recreationally  
will need a  
**fishing license**

Designed by: Hannah Fulton & Phyllis Lear