ATCHAFALAYA BASIN PROGRAM

TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP

Department of Natural Resources

LaSalle Building, Griffon Room, 1st Floor

BATON ROUGE, LA

July 19, 2012

MEETING MINUTES

MEMBERS:

Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Bobby Reed

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Glenn Constant

LSU Renewable Natural Resources Bill Kelso

Department of Natural Resources Keith Lovell

Department of Environmental Quality Chris Piehler

Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Mike Walker

ALTERNATES:

LSU Renewable Natural Resources Richard Keim (Absent)

USGS Dan Kroes

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service David Walther (Absent)

Others Present:

Department of Natural Resources Staff Stephen Chustz

Department of Natural Resources Staff Don Haydel

Department of Natural Resources Staff David Fruge

Department of Natural Resources Staff Charles Reulet

Department of Natural Resources Staff Thomas Van Biersel

Department of Natural Resources Staff Dana Naquin

NAS Karen Westphal

Friends of the Atchafalaya Charles Caillouet

USACE Steve Roberts

Jamie Bordelon SJB Group, LLC

**1.** **Call to Order, Introductions, Roll Call**

**2**. **Agenda approval**

Motion by Bill Kelso

Second by Chris Piehler

Agenda approved

**3.** **Approval of minutes from 05/15/12 meeting**

Motion by Bill Kelso

Seconded by Keith Lovell

Minutes Approved

**4.** **Legislative Update** – Steve Chustz

HB1 – Regular budget for operation of Atchafalaya Basin Program to remain constant

HB2 Capital Outlay – no funding initially until end of session, $1 million put into priority 2 and $3 million in Priority 5 (non-cash), all subject to bond commission approval, may be on bond commission September meeting agenda

HCR31 – Atchafalaya Basin Annual Plan approved

SCR46 – CPRA Coastal Management Plan – 50 year/$50 billion plan, DNR Coastal Management reviewed and submitted comments to include language about Basin restoration

SCR41 – Approves the annual integrated coastal protection plan for Fiscal Year 2012-2013

CPRA is working on sediment management plan

HB571 (Act 92) – makes one of the ex-officio members of Research & Promotion Board (one of the parish presidents to be appointed by the Police Jury Association) a voting member, authored by Representative St. Germain. Bill also includes language that allows a new member of the Technical Advisory Group to be appointed without a hearing by the Atchafalaya Basin Oversight Committee. A nomination can be made in writing and if no action taken in 30 days by the Legislative Oversight Committee, the new member is approved.

HB532 (Act 261) – Extends Cooperative Endeavor Agreements on Surface water

HB 565 (Act 265) DNR Sunset / Reauthorization – DNR reauthorized (every 5 years).

HB656 (Act 588) - Redefines inland boundary of the coastal zone. The new boundary is from the northern boundary of Iberia Parish south and now includes areas of Atchafalaya Basin. All projects in Coastal Zone will now require Coastal Use Permits; state will now have regulatory authority in Atchafalaya Basin

HCR117 – A request for a deviation from the 70% - 30% flow through the Old River Control Structure. The Corps denied the request. The Colonel suggested continuing conference calls with Low Water Committee– conference calls will continue on bi-weekly basis.

SCR31 – Memorialized Congress to reconsider the Corps’ Modified Charleston Method for mitigation.

**5.** **Corps of Engineers Update –** Melanie Labiche

Working on reviewing plans and specs to prepare for elements 6, 7, 9-1 & 9-2, and Bayou Eugene. Personnel were to go out in field the following week to conduct surveys, the Corps anticipates construction beginning early November.

Gapping of spoil banks south of Buffalo Cove (Logjam), 2 gaps in each spoil bank. Pre planning stages; draft in about 6 weeks. Glenn Constant asked about timeline to move dirt; response being possibly by the end of FY2013, Glenn requested to see drainage specs, Steve Chustz asked if funds allocated will be utilized and carried over. Melanie responded that she has received no information that it cannot be carried over. Steve Chustz commented that if elements of the Logjam are situated on state lands, the work can proceed without getting approval from private landowners for land rights, Yvonne Allen with Corps said all elements are on state lands.

Steve Chustz informed members that the Atchafalaya Basin Program is working with land owners and will share information with Corps to obtain land rights; Melanie said Corps Real Estate department is trying to get private land owner approval.

Melanie Labiche said John Eglin with Corps will be reviewing in field in next 2 weeks and that repairs will come out of construction dollars

**6.** **Review & Discussion of Proposed FY2014 Water Management Projects and Other Water Management Projects to be considered by the TAG**

***2012-01*** Iberia Parish (Buffalo Cove Area) Open flow from the main channel into Mile Point Bayou and clear the bayou. Problem – poor water quality, gap to be constructed, achieve more flow in system.

Glenn Constant – address individually – questioned if there was any merit in constructing another input and that the new element seems redundant, should look at bottom elevation to see if low enough, water doesn’t flow in area until at 13 feet. Dan Kroes: area has lots of sediment, afraid if deepened it will increase sediment problem, Glenn Constant: will experience sediment no matter how large sediment traps are, benefits need to be weighed against some cure that is healthy, need to balance with water quality benefits and improvements, the Corps’ original design function to its intended function, which was delivering flow to the area to the West.

Plan of Action: Talk to Mr. Schoeffler about effects of project, get elevation from Corps to run NRIAS tool. Don Haydel with the Atchafalaya Basin Program will set up a meeting with Glenn Constant and Mr. Schoeffler (project nominator)

***2012-02*** Address sediment accumulation at north and south ends of Little Bayou Tensas. The TAG may want to consider combining with 2012-06 project (multiple features, dredging of Tensas is in common) Glenn Constant: opportunity to put non inclusive Water Management Unit level plan in place for these 2 projects, plus open location canal project and review together, Water Management Unit scale used in getting water to a large uniform area.

Plan of Action:Mike Walker: blocking Upper Grand not a good idea because it is the primary source of water flow north to south, requested projects 2012-02, 2012-04, 2012-05, 2012-06 plus the previous year’s Location Canal north of Bayou Sorrel to be combined and reviewed together, Chris Piehler seconded motion, motion approved

***2012-03*** Requesting funds for using Moffatt-Nichol model for Cocodrie Swamp, Glenn would like to review based on observations of satellite imagery and questioned if want to spend funds developing models, may not be feasible to complete study in a short time period

Plan of Action: Defer and compare models, determine if other funding sources available to get project done in shorter time frame

***2012-07*** Install rock jetty north of Bayou Sorrel entrance into the main channel to divert sediment. Mike Walker stated it’s premature to take action before evaluating East Grand Lake. Glenn Constant reminded members that Coon Trap project has already been evaluated. Don Haydel will request more information from Corps and share with members, Steve Chustz suggested to remember that permits for projects are reviewed by several agencies, Glenn Constant would like input from Corps – questioning if this is the type of project the Technical Advisory Group should entertain or defer to Corps due to complexity of project, Glenn constant motioned to put project in parking lot, Mike Walker seconded, approved.

***2012-08*** Dredge the sand bar from the end of Murphy Lake.Bill Kelso: if area becomes isolated, good thing, incredibly productive, filled with fish. Maintenance will be more cost effective from mitigation perspective, Bill Kelso motioned to keep project on table and review more, Mike Walker seconded, motion approved.

Steve Chustz: Deferring process – want to encourage Technical Advisory Group to reconsider previously nominated projects on State lands because projects nominated on privately held land in the Basin are a challenge. Dan Kroes requested a list of previously nominated projects on state lands

**7. Public comment on water management projects**

**None at this time** (Some comments were made during TAG discussion of water management projects)

**8. Review of Ongoing Water Management Project Status**

Don Haydel

- Dog Leg Canal Maintenance Dredging – out for bid, in coastal use permit phase; will break ground in late September

- Upper Grand River Flats – landowner issues, no approval

- Bayou Boutte – submitted Corps permit to dredge and haul spoil out

Charles Reulet

* Bayou Fourche – received final report with cost estimates; plan is to place dredge spoil in the GIWW, moving forward on task order
* Location Canal North of Bayou Sorrel – received alternative from contractor; will be considered with F14 nomination in same area
* East Grand Lake Study – ongoing
* East Grand Lake – developing project report with estimates and will distribute soon

Dave Fruge

* Henderson Channels – maintenance dredging, plans & specs approved, bids open 05/31, construction to begin late summer
* Cocodrie Swamp – 2 key landowners do not approve, reevaluating options, have approval of 1 large land owner
* Beau Bayou – Engineering firm under contract by parish, preliminary cost estimate came in at $6 million, extremely high and over budget, next step is to coordinate with engineering firm and prioritize details

**9. Old Business**

Steve Chustz:

Big Alabama – estimated completion is Fall 2012

Bayou Sorrel Boat Launch in permitting phase

Krotz Springs Boat Launch – ongoing discussions regarding litigation

Lake End Park – Construction in process – 3 cabins

Cajun Coast Welcome Center – attorneys reviewing structural damages, issues and solutions

Veterans Park – Concession equipment being installed

Catahoula Pavilion – Completed

**10. New Business**

Comments on Corps Master Plan due by midnight tonight, DNR requesting revisions and clarification

SEIS for Recreation Development Features– comment period by December

Henderson Management Unit – Plan process is complete, crunching numbers for pumping stations, when receive hard numbers can move forward

Section 16 – In St. Martin Parish DNR successfully negotiating conservation servitude to not harvest bald cypress in that area and will remain as a public education area

**11.** **Path Forward**

Steve Chustz reviewed the path forward; meeting dates may shift a day or 2 depending on schedules.

**Draft FY2014 Annual Basin Plan Timeline\***

June 1, 2012 – Project Nomination Deadline

July 19, 2012 – TAG meeting to review proposed projects

August 8, 2012 – TAG meeting to discuss proposed projects

August 16, 2012 – R&P Meeting

September 5, 2012 – TAG meeting to approve projects

September 12, 2012 – TAG forwards approved projects to ABP

October 22, 2012 – Draft Annual Plan Completed

November 7, 2012 – R&P Meeting to Present FY2013 Annual Basin Plan

November 13-15, 2012 – Public Meetings to Present FY2013 Annual Basin Plan

November 29, 2012 – R & P Meeting to Discuss Comments and Approve Plan to send to CPRA

December 2012 – Present draft Annual Plan to CPRA

January 2013 – CPRA Approval

February 2013 – R & P Meeting

3/08/2013 – Submit FY 2013 Annual Plan to Legislature

04/08/2013 – Legislative Session Begins

\* Additional meetings may be held when deemed necessary

**12. Public Comment** – no comments from public

**13. Adjourn**

Motion by Glenn Constant

Seconded by Bill Kelso

Motion approved