

20170124 - FOA Board meeting - 7:00 PM - LWF

Board Members: Charles Fryling, Charles Caillouet, Jim Delahoussaye, Willie Fontenot, Ray Brassieur, Paul Kemp, Carolyn Delahoussaye

Attendees:

Board: Charles Fryling, Charles Caillouet, Jim Delahoussaye, Willie Fontenot, Ray Brassieur

Advisors and Guests: Karen Westphal, Dan Collins, Pam Caillouet, Dean Wilson, Charles Reulet, Bryan Piazza, Rebecca Triche, Karen Gautreaux (TNC), André Lyon <alencar13@gmail.com>

President Charlie Fryling opened the business meeting at approximately 7:15 PM.

Special Presentation:

The main speaker was Dean Wilson and others discussed his proposals and comments.

Dean presented a position paper from Basinkeeper and Louisiana Crawfish Producers – West concerning the problems with existing pipeline rights of way in the Floodway and the Bayou Bridge Pipeline permit application. (See attached Position Statement.)

Dean noted that the US Army Corps of Engineers has an agreement with the Hydro plant to put 65% of Mississippi River sediment thru the Atchafalaya. (See attached Ivar van Heerden letter.)

Dean postulated that the 1969 realignment of Bayou Sorrel and the 1994 modification to Grand River caused serious deposits of sediment into eastern swamps.

Dean went on record as opposed to the St. Martin Parish CIAP-funded Beau Bayou project.

Dean noted that Buffalo Cove is filling with Sediment.

Dean opposes the East Grand Lake Project in its original form and any new version of it between the APB and TNC.

Dean pointed to an area landowner history of logging forests and not showing concern about forest regeneration. One landowner claims that forest regeneration is on an 80-year cycle, but the forests are not regenerating.

He noted that 2016 year was a bad sediment year for bayou Sorrel; Bayou Sorrel landing was covered, the walkway to the landing was on dry land and had to be dug out in order to float as designed.

Dean proposed that all projects involving openings for river water to enter the swamps should be stopped until sediment levels can be reduced in the water. He thinks that the re-direction of Bayou Sorrel and Grand River from the 20th century should be reversed ASAP to reduce the sediment flow and that sediment-directing structures should be used to reduce the amount of sediment entering any new openings. He supports openings in pipeline spoil banks anywhere. He thinks that we should continue to open southern channels for output while we are figuring out how to handle inputs from the north. Dean says, "...there are no marginal swamps; all are important and should not be allowed to silt up... cypress regeneration cannot be achieved by accretion." Dean will not accept that we cannot change the direction of Floodway management, and continues to hold onto the position that we can reverse the problems if we make the

appropriate hydrological and management changes in the Floodway. His changes include building gates in the levees where the old channels were closed off and allowing water flow and access at low water times, both on the east and west side.

Dean claimed that he has a memo that shows that the Bayou Postilion project was changed after the fact. He said that Jody's Brown Bayou opening project was changed to a culvert project after landowner discussions and that the non-permitted violations that blocked the stream were allowed to continue.

Dean claims that some areas dry every year. Regeneration is not being prevented because of water cycle, but because of high standing water in parts of year. He suggests that regeneration occurred when conditions were good at logging time. Stands in some areas are 130 years old because they managed to recover because of the time of year of the logging. His position is that we cannot achieve cypress regeneration by accreting.

Dean said that lots of money is being spent on the coast with limited results but some of it could be spent in the Basin, with more positive habitat results.

Charles Reulet contended that the details of the new version of the East Grand Lake project are yet to be discussed and that input is still possible. Charles has suggested that proposals to dredge the lakes should be revisited but the costs have been prohibitive. Charles noted that the ABP and CPRA are looking at using sediment from Flat Lake to both restore the Lake and help rebuild the coast. They would like to prove the concept there and move north.

Bryan Piazza observed that hydraulic pressure is necessary to push water through from the north, so just making cuts for outlets and not inlets at the top of the project area will not work. There is already water coming in from the south at mid water stages. He noted that stressed forests exist around pipelines because water moves back and forth in those areas but stays high too long. TNC is measuring the speed of sediment accretion. TNC is setting up fellows to collect science data.

Bryan noted that putting structures in the rivers and changing COE policies will affect the Mississippi River and Tributaries project and may need Congressional action. He suggested that we need to seriously evaluate the effects of putting openings in levees. He claimed that 90% of the sediment is already going to the coast, so it is unlikely that we are likely to reduce the sediment load enough to eliminate sedimentation in the swamps.

Bryan stated that undoing channel training is a big problem; we will need elements to test and new tools to test with; do we need to piecemeal solutions or stop again and wait? If we want to propose big changes, we need examples on the ground to test and monitor.

Karen Gauthreaux noted that there will be a TNC update meeting on Feb22 and the Basin environment will be discussed.

Jim noted that it is not surprising that we don't have a comprehensive WM plan; it is a big, complicated project to take on.

Dan Collins appreciated the transparency of the discussions.

Summary of discussions:

Dean wants to stop making any cuts that will introduce River water into the swamps until we undo the Corps channel realignment elements of the Channel Training effort of the 20th century. He is ok with making cuts lower in the system to allow

water to flow out. He proposes making big changes in the Floodway hydrology, including installing structures in the levees at historic channel crossings that were cut off when the levees were built.

Bryan supports the Glenn Constant position that the floodway is part of a delta and that deltas build to the coast, and the natural progression of land building needs to be directed because of the human-induced changes in the hydrology, but it cannot be stopped and that major changes in the MRT plan will meet with much resistance. Any changes will take “coalition building” and lots of time. The political climate is certainly not conducive for major hydrologic changes right now. We need to know more about the science of the process before we attempt to make big changes.

Both sides seem to think that standing water is preventing cypress regeneration although there are differences of opinion about other contributors and about the overall health of the swamp forests. Dean thinks that the lack of cypress trees are the result of logging operations and that the timing of the logging determined the success of regeneration activity. Bryan thinks that the health of the swamp is held down because of current conditions. Dean argues that the current condition of the swamp forest is not poor.

Old Business

The July 26, 2016 meeting minutes were approved with no revisions.

Treasurer's Report

2015 Regions Balance of \$1,200.42 + PayPal Balance of \$1,154.15 + \$125 pending deposits = \$2,479.57 Available

2016 Regions Balance of \$1,836.02 + PayPal Balance of \$1,362.18 + no pending deposits = \$2,198.20 Available; for a 2016 net of -\$281.37

As of Jan. 24, 2017, there has been no activity so far this year, so the totals are the same.

Review Open Actions from previous meeting

Charles Caillouet noted that action is needed on officers and plans

2017 Board Members – no action taken

2017 Officers Elections – no action taken

Planning is needed on the Flood presentation at the Jeanerette Museum on April 5.

Charlie, Willie and Charles will go to LAF to meet with Ray & Jim in Feb. The intent will be to allocate presentation responsibilities, share images available for use in the presentation, and plan how to use the limited time and to engage the participants.

Partner Reports:

ABP:

Research & Promotion Board meeting:

Feb 1 at 0930 in the Griffon Room

Boy Scouts purchased McGees landing

ANHA:

Trails contract marker text in review

AWC upgrade in work; new displays are up;

emergency projector replacement is in work after a failure

LWF:

Rebecca will push for a Social media presence

Deadline for Conservation Awards Nominations due Feb 13, 2017; Banquet is March 18, 2017

TNC:

Feb 22: 0930-1130 at BRAF office; NGO update & Bryan Science update

Bryan giving Eagle Expo Keynote

Upcoming Events

Target Projects for 2015-2016

Flood Presentation

Mississippi River Commission trip meetings ?

EA Every Day - Year-Round Events ?

"Ask me" program at visitors center -Shane Bernard (*Teche*) presenting in New Iberia next Wed

ABP R&PB meeting: Feb 1

USACE-NGO meeting: Feb. 9, 2017: 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM: USACE District

Assembly Room; 7400 Leake Avenue; New Orleans

State appeal of verdict in Dan Collins case: Feb 20 (See attached notice)

TNC NGO update & Bryan Science update: Feb 22: 0930 at BRAF office

Legislative Session[s]: April 10: Regular Legislative Session starts

MRC High Water Trip: April 20, 2017?

Next meeting place and time

Mar 7, 2017 – (meeting moved because of Mardi Gras)

Location: TNC Office on Government St.

Time: 7:00 PM

The following regular meeting would be on March 28 (fourth Tuesday.)

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:00 PM.