

ATCHAFALAYA BASIN PROGRAM
TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP
Department of Natural Resources
LaSalle Building, Griffon Room, 1st Floor
BATON ROUGE, LA

September 4, 2013
9:30am-11:30am
MEETING MINUTES

MEMBERS:

Department of Wildlife and Fisheries	Bobby Reed
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Glenn Constant
LSU Renewable Natural Resources	Bill Kelso (absent)
Department of Natural Resources	Charles Reulet
Department of Environmental Quality	Tom Killeen
Department of Wildlife and Fisheries	Brac Salyers
USGS	Dan Kroes
Louisiana Department of Ag & Forestry	Joey Breaux (absent)
US Corps of Engineers	Melanie Labiche (absent)

ALTERNATES:

LSU Renewable Natural Resources	Richard Keim (absent)
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	David Walther

Others Present:

Department of Natural Resources Staff	Don Haydel
Department of Natural Resources Staff	Dana Naquin
USACE	Steve Roberts
Friends of the Atchafalaya	Charles Caillouet
Doug Meffert	Audubon Society
Paul Clifton	Providence
Brad Lambert	Harris, Deville & Assoc.

1. **Call to Order, Introductions, Roll Call**
2. **Agenda approval or amendment to the agenda by 2/3 vote**
Motion to approve by Glenn Constant
Second by Brac Salyers
Agenda approved
3. **Approval of minutes from 07/10/13 meeting**
Motion by Glenn Constant
Seconded by Dan Kroes
Minutes Approved
4. **Review and Discussion of Proposed FY2015 Water Management Projects and Other Water Management Projects to be Considered by the TAG – Glenn Constant**

1. **Project Number 2015-01** – St Mary Parish - Flat Lake Ecosystem

Prioritization – TAG **Approved** this project.

Type of Problem – Environmental

Nominating Party – St Mary Parish Government

Statement of Problem – Sedimentation causing loss of access to the Flat Lake and aquatic habitat loss that impacts the overall health of the ecosystem.

Proposed Work Area – Flat Lake Water Management Unit, St Martin Parish.

Proposed Action Description – The proposal requests that an environmental evaluation be conducted on the lake and its ecosystem in order to design a restoration project that could rehabilitate habitat to improve biological conditions and also to re-establish access for the benefit of public use.

TAG Analysis and Recommendation - The “Overview and Planning Process of the East Grand Lake Water Quality Improvement and Sediment Management Plan” was completed in 2010 as one of the projects funded in the 2009 Atchafalaya Basin Annual Plan. The overview clearly identified the Flat Lake area as an important component of the drainage of the Flat Lake and Upper Belle River WMUs and that its hydrodynamic influence should be quantified as part of the planning process. The overview document suggests that decisions regarding the future management of the waterways in and around Flat Lake will have a significant influence on the hydrology and ecology of the Western and Upper regions. Due to the changing physical landscape that routes water through most of the Upper Belle River WMU, sediment accumulation in Flat Lake continues to exacerbate drainage issues stagnation of interior swamp habitat. The proposed plan is consistent with the stated objectives of the existing planning process and should be considered for funding. In addition, the TAG also approved project number **201108** (Bathymetry Data in American Pass) in the FY 2013 Annual Plan which would support the development of this assessment.

2. Project Number 2015-02 – St Mary Parish - Joe Russo Boat Landing

Prioritization – TAG **Deferred** this project.

Type of Problem – Access

Nominating Party – St Mary Parish Government

Statement of Problem – There is inadequate parking, and failing dock, a need for elevated parking, and blockage to the ingress and egress of boat traffic at the site.

Proposed Work Area – Upper Belle River WMU - St Mary Parish.

Proposed Action Description – The proposal requests dredging for the GIWW, the entrance to Flat Lake, and access slips from the launch. It also request that improvements be made to the

dock, that a security systems be added , along with additional elevated parking, and restroom facilities.

TAG Analysis and Recommendation – This project is being proposed to improve user access to the area and is not subject to environmental review or technical evaluation unless it is otherwise approved and funded through the Atchafalaya Basin funding process. Upon approval as an access project, the TAG will review and consider any environmental concerns at the request of the AB Program.

3. Project Number 2015-03 – St Mary Parish - Wilson’s Boat Landing

Prioritization – TAG **Deferred** this project.

Type of Problem – Access

Nominating Party – St Mary Parish Government

Statement of Problem – The landing is not large enough to accommodate its commercial and recreational patrons.

Proposed Work Area – St Mary Parish.

Proposed Action Description – Redesign and reconstruct the channel, ramps, dock, and parking area.

TAG Analysis and Recommendation – This project is being proposed to improve user access to the area and is not subject to environmental review or technical evaluation unless it is otherwise approved and funded through the Atchafalaya Basin funding process. Upon approval

as an access project, the TAG will review and consider any environmental concerns at the request of the AB Program.

4. Project Number 2015-04 – St Mary Parish - Wilson’s Boat Landing

Prioritization – TAG Deferred this project.

Type of Problem – Access/Recreation

Nominating Party – St Mary Parish Government

Statement of Problem – Help fulfill the Master Plan objective for primitive camping in the Atchafalaya Basin and local objective for canoe and hiking trails in ideal location with existing access.

Proposed Work Area – St Mary Parish.

Proposed Action Description – Design and construct canoe and hiking trails.

TAG Analysis and Recommendation – This project is being proposed to improve user access and recreation in the area and is not subject to environmental review or technical evaluation unless it is otherwise approved and funded through the Atchafalaya Basin funding process. Upon approval as an access project, the TAG will review and consider any environmental concerns at the request of the AB Program.

5. Project Number 2015-05 – St Mary Parish - Taylor Point Cut

Prioritization – TAG Deferred this project.

Type of Problem – Access

Nominating Party – St Mary Parish Government

Statement of Problem – Taylor Point Cut is filling in with sediment and needs to be dredged to provide access from the boat landing to Grand Lake.

Proposed Work Area – St Mary Parish – Buffalo Cove WMU.

Proposed Action Description – Dredge the channel to improve navigation, fisheries, and access to the Atchafalaya Basin.

TAG Analysis and Recommendation – This project has been proposed and reviewed by the TAG on multiple occasions and in all cases the project was deferred. The primary reasons have been that the project has no ecological or environmental benefit and is unsustainable due to rapid sedimentation in the area. The proposed project could also generate environmental concern associated with spoil disposal. The TAG recommends that this project not be considered for funding. (Reference previous project evaluations, available on NRIAS).

6. Project Number 2015-06 – St Mary Parish - Interpretive Center

Prioritization – TAG **Deferred** this project.

Type of Problem – Recreation/Outreach

Nominating Party – St Mary Parish Government

Statement of Problem – Help fulfill the Master Plan objective for an interpretive center in the Atchafalaya Basin.

Proposed Work Area – St Mary Parish.

Proposed Action Description – Design and construct interpretive center.

TAG Analysis and Recommendation – This project is being proposed to improve user recreation and outreach in the area and is not subject to environmental review or technical evaluation unless it is otherwise approved and funded through the Atchafalaya Basin funding process. Upon approval as an access project, the TAG will review and consider any environmental concerns at the request of the AB Program.

7. Project Number 2015-07 – Dean Wilson - Rock Jetty and Coon Trap

Prioritization – TAG **Deferred** this project.

Type of Problem – Water/Sediment Management

Nominating Party – Dean Wilson – Atchafalaya Basinkeeper

Statement of Problem – Sediment is being diverted down Bayou Sorrel and is filling in wetlands and causing water quality problems.

Proposed Work Area – St Martin Parish – Pigeon Bay WMU.

Proposed Action Description – Install a rock Jetty in the Atchafalaya River to divert sediment away from Bayou Sorrel and close Coon Trap weir.

TAG Analysis and Recommendation – This proposal has multiple components, some of which have been previously reviewed. The closure of Coon Trap weir has previously been reviewed as part of the East Grand Lake Plan and will be considered under that planning process. The additional East Grand Lake project elements mentioned in the proposal are included in that process and will also be considered as part of a structured approach to address the hydrology and sediment accretion problems in that area. A series of those elements were approved in the FY2014 Annual Plan.

The TAG is supportive of the concept of sediment retention in the main channel of the Atchafalaya River. However, the planning and construction of a rock jetty or any other channel altering structure in the main stem of the Atchafalaya River requires close coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and this project has been deferred to them for technical advice as to the feasibility and stability of such a project.

8. Project Number 2015-08 – Dean Wilson - Rock Jetty and Block Upper Grand River

Prioritization – TAG **Deferred** this project.

Type of Problem – Water/Sediment Management

Nominating Party – Dean Wilson – Atchafalaya Basinkeeper

Statement of Problem – Channelization of Upper Grand River has increased sediment into the Pigeon Bay WMU and is impacting commerce and filling in wetlands causing water quality and navigation problems.

Proposed Work Area – St Martin and Iberville Parishes.

Proposed Action Description – Close Upper Grand River at the Atchafalaya River to prevent further sediment accretion in the Pigeon Bay WMU. Open Little Tensas Bayou at the Atchafalaya River. Install a rock jetty in the Atchafalaya River to divert sediment past Little

Tensas Bayou. Open numerous natural internal circulation pathways that were previously blocked.

TAG Analysis and Recommendation –Upper Grand River is part of the main infrastructure of waterways that route floodwaters through the Atchafalaya Basin Floodway System. Any consideration for rerouting water through Little Tensas Bayou and closing Upper Grand River must begin with an assessment by the U. S. Army Corps as it could impact flood control capacity of the system. The TAG is supportive of the concept of sediment retention in the main channel of the Atchafalaya River. However, the planning and construction of a rock jetty or any other channel altering structure in the main stem of the Atchafalaya River requires close coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The TAG recommends that this proposal be deferred, and that future consideration and technical guidance as to the feasibility and potential impacts of the proposed action be sought from the Corps.

9. Project Number 2015-09 – Warren Blanchard - Dredge Blue Point Chute

Prioritization – TAG **Deferred** this project.

Type of Problem – Water/Sediment Management

Nominating Party – Warren Blanchard - Commercial Crawfisherman

Statement of Problem – Blue Point Chute very shallow near the river due to sediment accretion and is not allowing water into the area near Grand Lake.

Proposed Work Area – St Martin Parish - Upper Bell River WMU.

Proposed Action Description – Dredge Blue Point Chute.

TAG Analysis and Recommendation – The “Overview and Planning Process of the East Grand Lake Water Quality Improvement and Sediment Management Plan” was completed in 2010 as one of the projects funded in the 2009 Atchafalaya Basin Annual Plan. The overview clearly identified the lower part of the Upper Bell River WMU as an important component of the drainage of the Flat Lake and Upper Belle River WMUs and that its hydrodynamic influence should be quantified as part of the planning process. The overview document suggests that decisions regarding the future management of the waterways in and around Flat Lake, including Blue Point Chute, will have a significant influence on the hydrology and ecology of the Western and Upper regions. It is uncertain whether the proposed plan is consistent with the stated objectives of the existing planning process and should be deferred pending a quantitative hydrology assessment. In addition, the TAG also approved project number **201108** (Bathymetry Data in American Pass) in the FY 2013 Annual Plan which would support the development of this assessment.

10. Project Number 2015-10 – Warren Blanchard - Dredge American Pass

Prioritization – TAG **Deferred** this project.

Type of Problem – Water/Sediment Management

Nominating Party – Warren Blanchard - Commercial Crawfisherman

Statement of Problem – Water quality problems result from lack of water flow out of American Pass into the river.

Proposed Work Area – St Martin Parish - Upper Bell River WMU.

Proposed Action Description – Dredge American Pass.

TAG Analysis and Recommendation – The “Overview and Planning Process of the East Grand Lake Water Quality Improvement and Sediment Management Plan” was completed in 2010 as one of the projects funded in the 2009 Atchafalaya Basin Annual Plan. The overview clearly identified the lower part of the Upper Bell River WMU as an important component of the drainage of the Flat Lake and Upper Belle River WMUs and that its hydrodynamic influence should be quantified as part of the planning process. The overview document suggests that decisions regarding the future management of the waterways in and around Flat Lake, including American Pass, will have a significant influence on the hydrology and ecology of the Western and Upper regions. It is uncertain whether the proposed plan is consistent with the stated objectives of the existing planning process and should be deferred pending a quantitative hydrology assessment. In addition, the TAG also approved project number **201108** (Bathymetry Data in American Pass) in the FY 2013 Annual Plan which would support the development of this assessment.

11. Project Number 2015-11 – Dan Kroes - Create sediment trap near river in 21 Inch Canal

Prioritization – TAG **Approved** this project.

Type of Problem – Water/Sediment Management

Nominating Party – Dan Kroes - USGS

Statement of Problem – Sediment from 21 Inch Canal is filling Bayou Boutee

Proposed Work Area – St Martin Parish - Upper Bell River WMU.

Proposed Action Description – Create sediment trap at the mouth of 21 inch Canal.

TAG Analysis and Recommendation – The proposed concept of reducing sediment in the project area is consistent with sediment reduction projects like the Dog Leg Canal. The TAG

recommends forwarding this project for approval and recommends a cost benefit assessment of be included to evaluate the efficiency of sediment traps as sediment reduction features on water management projects.

12. Project Number 2015-12 – Dan Kroes - Dredge sediment accretion from entrance to Murphy Lake.

Prioritization – TAG **Approved** this project to be appended to currently approved Project 2012-08 for evaluation as appropriate.

Type of Problem – Water/Sediment Management

Nominating Party – Dan Kroes - USGS

Statement of Problem – Sediment has closed off Murphy Lake from access in low water causing water circulation and water quality problems.

Proposed Work Area – St Martin Parish/ Iberville Parish - Flat Lake WMU.

Proposed Action Description – Dredge sediment accretion from entrance to Murphy Lake to improve access and water flow into the lake.

TAG Analysis and Recommendation – This project proposes a very similar action as Project 2012-08 which was approved by the TAG for funding in the FY 2012 Annual Plan. The TAG recommends that the two projects be funded as a unified effort and that the planning for the Murphy Lake project be closely coordinated with the East Grand Lake Plan.

13. Project Number 2015-13 – Dan Kroes - Create sediment trap near river in Orange Barrel Canal

Prioritization – TAG **Approved** this project.

Type of Problem – Water/Sediment Management

Nominating Party – Dan Kroes - USGS

Statement of Problem – Sediment from 21 Inch Canal is filling Orange Barrel Canal

Proposed Work Area – St Martin Parish - Upper Bell River WMU.

Proposed Action Description – Create sediment trap at the mouth of Orange Barrel Canal.

TAG Analysis and Recommendation – The proposed concept of reducing sediment in the project area is consistent with sediment reduction projects like the Dog Leg Canal. The TAG recommends forwarding this project for approval and recommends a cost benefit assessment of be included to evaluate the efficiency of sediment traps as sediment reduction features on water management projects.

14. Project Number 2015-14 – Richard Labbe - Dredge Work Canal

Prioritization – TAG **Approved** this project to be appended to currently approved Project 2010-01 for evaluation as appropriate.

Type of Problem – Water/Sediment Management

Nominating Party – Richard Labbe - Conservationist

Statement of Problem – Work Canal has filled with sediment and the blockage currently creates fish passage, access, and water quality problems.

Proposed Work Area – Iberville Parish - Bayou Des Glaisses.

Proposed Action Description – Dredge Work Canal from Atchafalaya River to I-10.

TAG Analysis and Recommendation – This project proposes a very similar action as Project 2010-01 which was approved by the TAG for funding in the FY 2010 Annual Plan. The TAG recommends that the two projects be considered as a unified effort to ensure consistency and compatibility among project features.

5. Old Business

Public notice from Corps – continued levee work north of I-10, David Walther will find out work schedule. Dan Kroes asked Brac Salyers about draw down in Crystal Lake in St. Martin Parish, Brac will send comments from Wildlife & Fisheries. St. Martin Parish recommended and requested Henderson draw down, waiting on Corps, 6ft is drawn down recommendation from Wildlife & Fisheries

6. New Business –

Don Haydel informed board that Charles Reulet is replacing Keith Lovell on the TAG, and Keith Lovell is replacing Robert Benoit on the Atchafalaya Basin Research & Promotion Board.

7. Path Forward

Don Haydel is preparing a letter to recommend the FY2015 project nominations to the Atchafalaya Basin Research & Promotion Board – will send letter to Bobby Reed for signature.

8. Public Comment –

Tom Killeen asked if nominated projects have to be paired in same geographical area in order to be approved for the ABP Annual Plan, Glenn Constant said easier to approve if in same WMU or in same footprint boundaries.

9. Adjourn

Motion by Glenn Constant
Seconded by Brac Salyers
Meeting adjourned

Dana Naquin
Atchafalaya Basin Program