



Landmarks

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WETLANDS FESTIVAL AT JEAN LAFITTE

On Saturday, March 28th, 2015, the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA) Task Force presented the "I Remember..." Art Exhibit and Wetlands Festival at the Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve at 6588 Baratavia Blvd., Marrero, LA from 1:30pm to 4:30pm. Jefferson Parish President John F. Young, Jr. attended as the exhibit's keynote speaker following the festival activities.

The art exhibit features environmental portraits and landscape photographs by Lane Lefort and oil paintings by Marian Brister Martinez. Both artists are Louisiana natives and have used their artistic talents to capture the culture and heritage of the communities in coastal Louisiana.

According to Lefort, "I've seen the changes in culture and environment. With photography you can't go back, you have to capture the history and ecology in real-time."

The work by Marian Brister Martinez consists of ten paintings ranging from a 75-year period depicting daily life along the Lower Mississippi River. "As a child, the river played a part in my daily life. But, change is inevitable, and as the years passed, our lives focused on other things. I thought it would be important to touch upon this subject in order to document and bring light to a way of life that has quickly disappeared."

The event also included recorded presentations of 11 oral historians as they share their environmental portraits and stories. Interviews were conducted over a span of a year to capture the importance of varying lifestyles of individuals living and working in coastal Louisiana.

Among the interviewees are local residents: Sue Laudeman, Marietta Smith Greene, and Eddie Sapia of Lafitte. *(Continues on Page 2)*



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DATES TO REMEMBER...

May 7	BTNEP Management Conference Meeting #71	Thibodaux, LA
May 12	Louisiana Environmental Education Commission Meeting	Baton Rouge, LA
May 14	Task Force Meeting	Lafayette, LA
June 23	LEEC Arts & Language Arts Contest Reception	Baton Rouge, LA

(Wetlands Festival in Lafitte Continued from page 1)

All of these individuals have vastly different experiences but share roots in the New Orleans area which is seated in the Pontchartrain and Breton Sound Basins. Each of the oral histories collected are unique and informative.

"The collected environmental portraits and oral histories are important tools in connecting viewers to the cultural effects of land loss in coastal Louisiana. The artists having a first-hand view of coastal land loss in Louisiana offers a perspective that is unique ... not just to habitat but to the people and the culture of this wonderful State" says Jeff Weller, US Fish and Wildlife Field Supervisor and CWPPRA Task Force member.

Festival activities included walking tours with nature photography, illustrating your own wetlands story, uses of native plants, and birdwatching. Throughout the afternoon, musicians from the Cajun Music Preservation Society performed. The event was fun, engaging, and an eye-opening experience for everyone who attended. Attendees were also able to bring their smart phones to hear the historians over their phones.

The art exhibit will remain open for public viewing through June 28th. Teachers are encouraged to call the National Park Service to arrange field trips for their students. For more information contact Kelia Fontenot Bingham, CWPPRA Public Outreach Coordinator.



EARTH DAY IN BATON ROUGE



The annual Louisiana Earth Day was held in downtown Baton Rouge, La. on April 19th. This year's theme was "Celebrate and Educate." This educational observance is one of the Nation's largest Earth Day celebrations. The 2015 event was a special event as it marked the 25th Anniversary of Louisiana Earth Day. The festivities took place from 12pm to 6pm. Louisiana Earth Day features earth-friendly artists, vendors and educators to gather together to demonstrate support for environmental protection.

"We believe in personal responsibility and that means informing people of the things that they can do, and the latest research," chair member Brenda Nixon said. "It's a shared responsibility, but mainly it's personal activism — taking care of our own state." Nixon said the mission and theme seeks to encourage both individual and corporate environmental awareness and conservation.

CWPPRA Outreach staff participated at the Wetlands Tent hosted by Louisiana Sea Grant with Marine Education Coordinator, Diane Lindstedt. A game of Coastal Wetlands Jeopardy educated and entertained both children and adults. This instructive exercise demonstrated the value of coastal wetlands and CWPPRA's efforts to sustain our coast to the public. Along with the jeopardy game, CWPPRA publications were shared with festival goers. The Children's Activity Book, complete with stickers, was very popular at this year's celebration.

FEATURED PROJECT: SHELL BEACH SOUTH MARSH CREATION

The project is located in Region 1, Pontchartrain Basin, South Lake Borgne Mapping Unit, St. Bernard Parish, north bank of the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet (MRGO) in the vicinity of Shell Beach.

The marsh boundary separating Lake Borgne and the MRGO has undergone both interior and shoreline wetland losses due to subsidence, impacts related to construction and use of the MRGO (i.e., deep draft vessel traffic), and wind-driven waves. Although much of the project area is protected from edge erosion by shoreline protection measures, and since 2009, the MRGO has been deauthorized for deep draft navigation and maintenance, interior wetland loss due to subsidence continues to cause marsh fragmentation and pond enlargement. Wetland loss rates in the project area are estimated to be -0.60 percent a year based on USGS analysis.

The proposed project will create and nourish 634 acres of marsh using dredged sediment from Lake Borgne. Existing high shorelines along Lake Borgne, remnants of previous containment dikes and marsh edge, would be used for containment to the extent practical. Constructed containment dikes would be breached/gapped as needed to provide tidal exchange after fill materials settle and consolidate. The project would create 346 acres of

marsh and nourish at least 288 acres of existing fragmented marsh. A target fill elevation of +1.2 feet is envisioned to enhance longevity of this land form. Additionally, 187 acres of vegetative planting will occur within the newly created areas. Due to the presence of existing banklines, dredged slurry overflow could potentially be discharged immediately adjacent to the project polygons, resulting in nourishment of additional areas.

This project was approved for Phase I Engineering and Design in January 2015.



(Above) PO-168 Shell Beach South Marsh Creation Project.



Subsidence and salt water intrusion has caused shoreline and wetland loss within the marsh boundary separating Lake Borgne and the MRGO. Dredged sediment from Lake Borgne will be pumped into open water areas which will create 346 acres of marsh and nourish 288 acres of existing fragmented marsh.



COASTAL DAY WITH THE LEGISLATURE

CWPPRA Outreach staff attended Coastal Day with the Louisiana Legislature on April 14th in Baton Rouge, La. Coastal Day at the Legislature is an annual event held at the Louisiana State Capitol building in the rotunda. Coastal Day with the Legislature is an educational avenue for State representatives to learn about the impacts of coastal land loss in Louisiana. The event was attended by many State Legislators and concerned businesses. CWPPRA restoration projects were highlighted as CWPPRA has supported the sustainability of coastal Louisiana for the past 25 years.



This event is hosted by the Coast Builders Coalition. The Coalition is a non-profit trade association that brings together leaders from the private and public sectors to promote an efficient and effective program to sustain the Gulf Coast. The Coast Builders Coalition promotes the development of science, technology, and workforce initiatives that are the foundation for achieving a sustainable Gulf Coast.



COASTAL WETLANDS PLANNING, PROTECTION AND RESTORATION ACT

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