

**Lower Mississippi River Ecosystem Team**  
**Full Team Meeting Minutes**  
**August 19-20, 2008**  
**THEME: Contributing to the Future: Passing the Passion**

**Meeting Overview:**

The annual meeting of the Lower Mississippi River Ecosystem Team (LMRE) was held at the Southeast Louisiana Refuges Complex on August 19-20, 2008. A list of attendees is attached. An agenda is also attached to the end of this document following the list of attendees. See the agenda to note speakers.

A lot of discussion was held on sharing experiences and the work we do on a daily basis that motivates us to continue to be excellent professionals in a changing world. The group discussed how we are all overextended yet we still need to stay motivated and informed as we integrate changing technology into our daily lives ... and all that somehow translating into on-the-ground results for the resource. Therefore, the main part of the meeting revolved around individuals within the LMRE giving 20 minute presentations about the coolest things they do that motivate them and keep the “spark” kindled in the face of constant change and increased administrivia. Sustained motivation and passion for the resource was the ultimate goal of the meeting

Five guest speakers also presented. Other issues that were discussed included the changing dynamics of hunting and fishing, drought issues, environmental education, motivational techniques, ground truthing what we do, mentoring, research, and habitat needs. The names of speakers can be found on the agenda attached to the end of this document.

One of the main things the Steering Committee aimed for was for the meeting to produce a list of things the attendees could take back to their stations and put to practical use. The gleaned ideas plus who the idea/input is attributed to is shown in table form at the end of the body of the minutes.

**Team Business:**

Randy Cook conducted the team elections for even-year vacancies on the team Steering Committee as per the team’s Operating Procedures. No nominations were received from the floor. Randy Cook motioned and Ken Litzenberger seconded that the following list of nominees be unanimously elected as a slate of representatives to the team. The vote was unanimous. The new Steering Committee members, serving two year terms, are:

Tom Edwards – Migratory Birds  
Steve Alexander – Ecological Services (ES)  
Randy Cook - Refuges  
Keith Weaver – At Large  
Bob Oliveri – Law Enforcement

Other Steering Committee members whose terms will expire in August 2009 are:

George Chandler – Team Leader  
Lindsey Lewis – Ecological Services (ES)  
Ken Litzenberger - Refuges  
Keith Weaver – At Large  
Karen Kilpatrick - Fisheries

Additionally, team business included the election of a refuge representative to the Private Lands Committee. Brett Wehrle was nominated by George Chandler, seconded by Randy Cook, and unanimously elected to be the refuge representative on the Private Lands Committee. The position is permanent until he resigns from the committee.

### **Take Home Points from the Meeting**

<b>Take Home Point</b>	<b>Presenter</b>
Keep connected with universities – connect back/connect with	Dr. Rick Kaminski
4 cancers of conversation: Criticize, complain, compete, comparing negatively	Dr. Mamie Parker
See, embrace, and <i>deliver</i> change!	Dr. Mamie Parker
Address the opportunities to address the issues. Remember and don't forsake <i>applied</i> science vs. <i>modeled</i> science!	Dr. Dale Arner
Take frustration and seek fulfillment!	Dr. Rick Kaminski
Remember to do your jobs with PRIDE – Personal Responsibility In Daily Effort	Dr. Rick Kaminski
Commandments of Conservation (see attached list)	Dr. Rick Kaminski
Money speaks – use your statistics to generate new money	Jeremy Leitz & John Taylor (TPWD)
Do a zipcode analysis of your visitors and permittees to see what clientele you are serving and how they could help you generate interest and funds	Drs. Jeremy Leitz & John Taylor (TPWD)
Ground truthing! Standing on the the Mollicy Levee was what finally convinced people to embrace the project.	Brett Hortman
People are opting out of recreation because of societal time demands. Show them a value in recreation.	Bob Marshall
Help people discover their ownership in what you do.	Matt Connor
Be a “designer of disturbance” – create partnerships to manage your goals and objectives.	Matt Connor
Make a difference – regardless of how insignificant you feel or how daunting the opportunity appears. Step up when the opportunity presents itself.	Kelley Purkey
Let what you do not just be a part of your life – let it be who you are!	Kelley Purkey
The safest place for a ship to be is in the harbor – but that's not where it was created to be!	Jason Wilson
Regardless of where you want to be, right now you are where you need to be – so embrace it.	Jason Wilson
Be careful – there are bad folks out there.	Bob Oliveri

## Commandments of Conservation

1. Thou shall be a **conservationist** (i.e., preserving endangered and threatened natural resources, restoring degraded ones, and using responsibly those sustainable).
2. Thou shall remember that "**keeping every cog and wheel is the first precaution in environmental tinkering**" (Aldo Leopold).
3. Thou shall **read "bibles"** of nature and conservation to oneself and our children, then practice the bible's teachings.
4. Thou shall purchase hunting, fishing, or other **privileged use licenses**, as these conserve habitat.
5. Thou shall seek and use **reliable science** to manage wildlife, fisheries, and other natural resources on National Wildlife Refuges and other public and private lands.
6. Thou shall be a member of The Wildlife Society, American Fisheries Society, or other **professional societies** and serve your society.
7. Thou shall also be a member of **conservation organizations** of choice with missions to secure and enhance habitats for fish and wildlife.
8. Thou shall purchase Migratory Bird Conservation Stamps ("duck stamps") or other **habitat-securing stamps**.
9. Thou shall promote sale of **Planet Earth Conservation (PEC) stamps**, required by all people driving gas-powered vehicles.
10. Thou shall instill a "**land ethic**" in human kind, especially in our children - the earth's next generation of conservationists.
11. Thou shall "**Go Outside**" and take children along to save them from "nature-deficit disorder."
12. Thou shall help our publics understand that **legal hunting and fishing** are cornerstones of conservation and educate all people about the biological legitimacy of hunting and fishing.
13. Thou shall work with all **partners** to conserve fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuous benefit of natural and human communities.
14. Thou shall seek opportunities to promote **conservation initiatives** of the Farm Bill - an Ecosystem Management Plan for the United States.
15. Thou shall **grow professionally** through continued education, work experience, certification, conferences, etc.
16. Thou shall be **active alumni** of your university alma mater(s) and help recruit students into the natural resources profession.
17. Thou shall appreciate media publicity concerning **climate change**, because it is stimulating earthly conservation by human kind.
18. Thou shall serve our natural resources and human kind all the days of our life.

## Attendees:

George Chandler  
Karen Kilpatrick  
Wade Scarbrough  
Gypsy Hanks  
Brett Hortman  
Kelley Purkey  
Ken Litzenberger  
Jason Wilson  
Jeremy Bennett  
Matt Connor  
Joe McGowan  
Paul Yakupzak  
Paul Gideon  
John Wessman

Barrett Fortier  
Byron Fortier  
Bradley Bordelon  
Bob Strader  
John Simpson  
Randy Cook  
Tom Edwards  
Bob Oliveri  
Steve Alexander  
Mark Sattleberg  
Keith Weaver  
Lindsey Lewis  
Judy Toppins  
Brett Wehrle

Jake Tuttle  
Andy Dolan  
James Harris  
Kevin Roy  
Glenn Harris  
Pon Dixon  
Bo Sloan  
Chris Carrell  
Neil Lalonde  
Glenn Constant  
Kayla Dibenedeto  
Danny Breaux

**LMRE Full-Team Meeting Agenda – FINAL**  
**Southeast Louisiana Refuges Complex**  
**Big Branch Marsh Refuge**  
**August 19-20, 2008**

<b>DAY 1 – August 19, 2008</b>		
<b>Time</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Comments</b>
8:00am-8:15 am	Introduction/Open	George Chandler
8:15 am -8:45 am	Speaker #1 –	Mamie Parker
8:45 am -9:15 am	Speaker #2 –	Dr. Dale Arner
9:15 am – 9:35 am	Staff Presentation #1 - EE partnership w/Shell Oil	Byron Fortier
9:35 am -10:00 am	BREAK	
10:00 am -10:30 am	Speaker #3 -	Dr. Rick Kaminski
10:30 am – 10:50 am	Staff Presentation #2 - Mollicy Wetland Restoration	Brett Hortman
10:50 am -11:20 am	Speaker #4 – "Attempts to understand the demographics of our clientele to guide marketing strategies at Texas Parks and Wildlife"	Jeremy Leitz, John Taylor – TPWD
11:20 am -12:45pm	LUNCH	
12:45 pm -1:05 pm	Staff Presentation #3 -	Steve Alexander
1:05 pm -1:25 pm	Staff Presentation #4 -	Kelley Purkey
1:25 pm – 1:45 pm	Staff Presentation #5 - "Because So Much Stuff Lives in Grass"	Matt Conner
1:45 pm – 2:15 pm	BREAK	
2:15 pm -2:45 pm	Speaker #5 –	Betsy Dresser
2:45 pm – 3:15 pm	Speaker #6 –	Bob Marshall
3:15 pm -3:35 pm	Staff Presentation #6 – USFWS Biologist-in-Training Program: Connecting Young People to Aquatic Habitats	Judy Toppins
3:35pm-3:55 pm	Staff Presentation #7 - Pelican Banding Program	Neil LaLonde
3:55 pm – 4:15 pm	Staff Presentation #8 -	Jeremy Bennett
<b>DAY 2 – August 20, 2008</b>		
8:00 am -8:30 am	Team Business	Elections – Randy Cook
8:30 am -9:15 am	Updates	
	• Coastal Programs	Kevin Roy
	• Private Lands	Andy Dolan
9:15 am -9:35 am	Staff Presentation #9 - LE Undercover Operation	Bob Oliveri
9:35 am -10:05 am	BREAK	
10:05 am -10:25 am	Staff Presentation #10 - "Northern Snakehead Status"	Lindsey Lewis
10:25am-10:45am	Staff Presentation #11 -	Jason Wilson
10:45 am -11:15 am	Waterfowl Survey Results	Paul Yakupzak
11:30 am	ADJOURN	