

## LOUISIANA TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING

### NRCS CONFERENCE ROOM

### LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA

MAY 18, 2011

#### **RECORD OF AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Scott Edwards, NRCS State Resource Conservationist, opened the meeting at 9:30 a.m., and welcomed the meeting participants. (See attendance list attached.) Each member introduced themselves to the committee. Edwards reviewed the agenda and commented on the highlights of items to be discussed.

The last committee meeting minutes were handed out for review. The minutes were accepted. All LASTC meeting minutes are being posted on the Louisiana NRCS Technical Committee website at <http://www.la.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/LASTC/>.

Edwards stated today's meeting will focus on the 2011 Locally Led Process resource concern priority rankings. Each LASTC member organization present will have an opportunity to provide input regarding statewide resource concern priority ranking.

#### ◆ **REVIEW OF THE 2011 LOCALLY LED PROCESS**

Scott Edwards, NRCS State Resource Conservationist, reviewed the FY 2011 Locally Led Conservation Process. An essential element of the locally led conservation is input from a broad range of agencies, organizations, businesses, and individuals in the local area that have an interest in natural resource management and are familiar with local resource needs and conditions. These representatives should reflect the diversity of the residents, landowners, and land operators in the local area. Locally Led Conservation is based on the principle that community stakeholders are the best suited to deal with local resource problems. Local work groups submit priorities to the State Office in March. The State Technical Committee sets the state priorities.

After discussion, each LASTC member organization present voted on statewide resource concerns for use in 2011 conservation program delivery. The LASTC ranking results were:

**Resource Concern Points**

Plants - Plant Condition – Noxious and Invasive Plants	9
Animals - Fish and Wildlife - Inadequate Cover/Shelter	6
Erosion – Shoreline	6
Water - Water Quality - Excessive Nutrients and Organics in Surface Water	5
Animals - Fish and Wildlife - Inadequate Food	4
Animals - Fish and Wildlife – Plant Community Fragmentation	4
Animals - Fish and Wildlife - Threatened and Endangered Species: Declining Species, Species of Concern	4
Water – Water Quality – Excessive Suspended Sediment and Turbidity in Surface Water	4
Water – Water Quantity – Aquifer Overdraft	4
Water - Water Quantity - Excessive Runoff, Flooding, or Ponding	4
Domestic Animals - Inadequate Quantities and Quality of Feed and Forage	3
Animals – Fish and Wildlife – Imbalance Among and Within Populations	3
Plant Condition – Productivity, Health and Vigor	3
Soil – Soil Erosion – Sheet and Rill	3
Water Quantity – Reduced Storage of Water Bodies by Sediment Accumulation	2
Domestic Animals – Inadequate Stock water	1
Drought Assistance	1
Soil Condition – Organic Matter Depletion	1
Soil – Soil Erosion – Classic Gully	1
Soil – Soil Erosion – Streambank	1
Water – Water Quality – Excessive Salinity in Ground Water	1
Water – Water Quality – Inefficient Water Use on Irrigated Land	1

These results will be posted on the NRCS state web site at  
<http://www.la.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/LASTC/>.

◆ **CONSERVATION DELIVERY STREAMLINING INITIATIVE (CDSI)**

Brad Sticker, NRCS State Conservation Engineer, stated there was a national NRCS initiative on conservation delivery streamlining that began in January 2009. It is a five year initiative to help address lack of time in the field; cumbersome IT tools; lack of integration of IT tools; potential loss of technical expertise. The three overarching objectives for delivering conservation assistance that will: simplify conservation delivery; streamline business processes; and ensure science-based assistance. Practices that are completed are: Heavy Use Area Protection (516), Nutrient Management (590), Integrated Pest Management (595), Residue and Tillage Management, No-till/Strip-till/Direct Seed (329); Residue Management, Seasonal (344), Residue and Tillage Management, Mulch Till (345); Residue and Tillage Management, Ridge Till (346), Waste Treatment (629). Practices that are currently in development are: Fence (382), Grade Stabilization Structure (410), Irrigation Water Conveyance (430), Irrigation Water Management (449), Pipeline (516), Tree and Shrub Establishment (612), and Watering Facility (614).

◆ **2011 PROGRAMS UPDATE**

Leslie Michael, NRCS Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, gave a FY 2011 Programs Update.

The Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) for FY 2011 in Louisiana received nine applications for a total of 1210.9 acres to be enrolled; of which one 20-year agreement and five 10-year agreements and three easements were approved.

The Wetlands Reserve Program for FY 2011 in Louisiana has currently 257 applications for 69,286 acres that have been approved. As of May 11, 2011, 668 total easements are currently enrolled for a total of 224,732 acres.

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program for FY 2011 in Louisiana received a total allocation of \$1,084,358. A total of 252 applications were received with 56 contracts obligated for a total of 4,993.2. Applications are still being processed.

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program for FY 2011 in Louisiana received a total allocation of \$13,040,195. A total of 571 contracts were

obligated for \$11,446,990. Three hundred and five livestock contracts were obligated for a total of 49.6 percent of the obligated contracts.

The Conservation Stewardship Program for FY 2011 in Louisiana received \$6,411,743.00 for pre-approved applications of which 211 were awarded contracts for a total of 219,648.2 acres for agricultural land. For non-industrial private forestland \$361,702.00 was awarded for 58 contracts for a total of 29,764.9 acres.

The NRCS Civil Rights Division has encouraged consideration on the socially disadvantage spectrum regarding increasing the cost share rates to socially disadvantage participants to 90% for this group. It was requested that the committee provide any comments or feedback to Kevin Norton or Leslie Michael.

◆ **INITIATIVE UPDATES**

Scott Edwards, NRCS State Resource Conservationist, gave an initiatives update overview. The Longleaf Pine Initiative is a multi-state agreement with National Wild Turkey Federation to give direct technical assistance in the delivery of the longleaf pine initiative. There is approximately \$750,000 for Louisiana to use for landowner assistance with implementation of the longleaf initiative. The Mississippi River Basin Initiative has three focus areas approved the NE Delta – Upper Joe's Bayou, Bouef River, and Lower Mermentau. There are 17 land user contracts for \$325,748. Migratory Bird Habitat Initiative has been a success that covers half the state. There have been over 2,000 applications through EQIP and WRP. To address the multiple initiatives across the state, NRCS has moved to a Strategic Watershed Action Teams (SWATs). These teams accelerate conservation activities through: outreach, conservation planning, practice implementation, and follow-up.

Edwards asked for the input from the committee on having meetings four times a year. There would be two meeting teleconferences and two face-to-face meetings. One in the spring in Lafayette and one in fall in Alexandria with teleconferences in between.

Brad Sticker, NRCS State Conservation Engineer, commented on the potential flooding of the Mississippi River and how the federal government and sister agencies will respond to it. Brad explained the main program in place is the Emergency Watershed Program.

◆ **PARTNER UPDATES OF NEW ACTIVITIES**

Emelise Cormier, LDEQ, stated there is potential funding for additional monitoring in the watersheds initiative

Phillip Turnipseed, USGS, offered to host the next spring meeting for the committee.

Luke Lewis, NWTF, reported NWTF and the U.S. Forest Service are going to be having two field days, one in August and one in September or October in McNary, Louisiana.

- ◆ **Next Meeting Date** – No specific meeting date was set. Members will be notified when the next scheduled teleconference in July is scheduled.

11:56 a.m. – Meeting Adjourned

**LOUISIANA STATE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**NRCS CONFERENCE ROOM**  
**LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA**  
**MAY 18, 2011**  
**LIST OF ATTENDEES**

Scott Edwards, USDA-NRCS  
Leslie Michael, USDA-NRCS  
David Williams, USDA-NRCS  
Tim Landreneau, USDA-NRCS  
Brad Sticker, USDA-NRCS  
Charles Guillory, USDA-NRCS  
Tania Nanna, USDA-NRCS  
Johanna Pate, USDA-NRCS  
Randy Cheveallier, USDA-NRCS  
Chris Coreil, USDA-NRCS  
John Pitre, USDA-NRCS  
Dan Didier, USDA-NRCS  
Randolph Joseph, USDA-NRCS  
Phil Turnipseed, USGS  
Richard Cambre, USDA APHIS  
Robert Smith, USFWS  
Marty Floyd, LWF  
Jan Boydston, LDEQ  
Emelise Cormier, LDEQ  
Bryan Kemp, Gulf CPR  
Barry Wilson, GCJV  
Joey Breaux, LDAF-OSWC  
Paul Davidson, Black Bear Conservation Coalition  
Jess Barr, LCP  
Luke Lewis, NWTF  
Ernest Girouard, LA Master Farmer Program  
Dwight Landreneau, LSU AgCenter  
Steve Linscombe, LSU AgCenter  
Steve Munson, LSU AgCenter  
Dr. Durga Poudel, ULL  
Harvey Reed, LA Association of Cooperators  
Elvadus Fields, LA Association of Cooperators  
Paul Murphy, LA Office of Homeland Security