A regular meeting of the Atchafalaya Trace Commission (Commission) was held Wednesday, December 7, 2011, at 10:00 AM at the Capital Park Welcome Center in Baton Rouge.

Commissioners present:
Ascession Parish: Ramon Gomez
Avoyelles Parish: Wilbert Carmouche
Concordia Parish: Tommy Polk
East Baton Rouge Parish: Gerren Sias
Iberia Parish: Chris Burton
Iberville Parish: Gene Seneca
Pointe Coupee Parish: J. A. Rummler, Vice-chair
St. Mary Parish: Carrie Stansbury, Chair
Terrebonne Parish: Patrick Thomas Gordon, Treasurer
West Baton Rouge Parish: Julie Rose
Assistant Superintendent, Joe Llewellyn, Jean Lafitte National Historic Park, Ex Officio

Commissioners absent:
Assumption Parish: Phillip Daigle, Sr.
Lafayette Parish: Jennifer Ritter, Secretary
St. Landry Parish: Vacant seat
St. Martin Parish: Vacant seat

Others present:
Debra Credeur, Executive Director, Atchafalaya National Heritage Area and Trace Commission
Willie Fontenot, Friends of Atchafalaya
Richard Goyer, Friends of Atchafalaya
Charles Fryling, Friends of Atchafalaya
Charles Caillouet, Friends of Atchafalaya
Jim Delahoussaye, Friends of Atchafalaya
Gerard Overhultz, Laissez Faire, Inc.
Dona Richard, Director, St. Martin Parish Tourist Commission
Nicole Patin, Tour du Teche
Dana Naquin, DNR/Atchafalaya Basin Program
Leanne Weill, Interim Assistant Secretary, Louisiana Office of Tourism

Chair Carrie Stansbury called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM and welcomed Pam Cannatella, the newly appointed Commissioner for St. Landry Parish after which the Commissioners introduced themselves.

Debra introduced Leanne Weill, Interim Assistant Secretary, and Louisiana Office of Tourism (LOT). Leanne thanked the Commission for their service and assured them that she recognizes the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area (ANHA) as one of Louisiana’s greatest assets. LOT will be including the ANHA in its promotion of the entire State, as well as lend assistance with the promotion of Experience Atchafalaya Days.

Agenda Approval
Wilbert Carmouche moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Julie Rose seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Approval of September 28, 2011 Meeting Minutes
Gene Seneca moved for approval of the September 28, 2011 regular meeting minutes.
J.A. Rummler seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Education Committee Report
Education Committee Chair Julie Rose reported on the activity of the Committee, composed of Julie Rose, Lilli Thorpe of State Parks and Jennifer Guidry. Two conference calls were held in November during which the first steps for planning education programs for the ANHA were discussed. Lilli and Jennifer and Jennifer’s graduate assistant Kendall Miller Brousard are compiling an analysis of Louisiana State’s DOE Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) by subject and by grade level, K-12 that directly relate and support the interpretative themes approved by the Commission. The group is researching online educational resources as they relate to the Heritage Area’s themes, which will be the basis for future educational programs and activities.

Education Committee Mission Statement:
The Atchafalaya National Heritage Area Education Committee is dedicated to developing, supporting, and making available educational opportunities for K-12 learners and adult learners that support the ANHA interpretive themes.

Education Committee Goals for 2012:
- Identify education partners and speakers bureau partner opportunities
- Identify teacher education opportunities
- Identify GLEs from LA DOE that are relevant to the ANHA interpretative themes
- Identify outstanding online education resources
- Augment education resources on the ANHA website
- Explore grant opportunities for future ANHA education activities

Director’s Project Report
Commission: Ascension and St. Martin have vacant seats and Iberia and Iberville Parishes’ Commissioners terms are up for renewal. By law, commissioners are considered still appointed until they are replaced which does help with making a quorum. To reduce paperwork and better track what time has been reported, Debra will maintain running time sheets per fiscal year on each Commissioner and provide these at each Commission meeting.

Signage: Approximately 115 (Type 3, 2’x3 1/2’) signs have been installed in 11 Parishes. The DOTD sign shop is fabricating 5 large 14’x10’ signs and State Purchasing is issuing a bid request for installation this week.

Brochure/Map: State Printing is working on final touches and will have a proof soon. This will be a one-piece instead of the 4 regional maps used before although these will be available electronically.

Web Site Upgrades: We are waiting on an estimate from the State contracted media agency.

The Management Plan is expected to be sent to Secretary of Interior (final approval stop) in January.
**Projects with CODOFIL:** Several collaborative efforts are underway with the State’s francophone support agency: Tax credit cross promotion with French speaking businesses; Tax credit brochure to be translated and printed in French; locating a narrator for the French translation and production of our video; and inventory of French & Creole-speaking businesses across the State; and. Please submit the names of the businesses in your parish that speak and/or understand French or Creole to me by email to dcredeur@crt.la.gov or by mail to P. O. Box P. O. Box 44243, Baton Rouge, LA 70804.

**Experience Atchafalaya Days:** Events held in October were an art exhibit & reception; photo exhibit; Swamp Expo; 2 canoe trips; and 4 presentations on Atchafalaya Basin, bird watching and Cajun healing practices. Debra received feedback on considering a year-round event format so the events would not have competition with all of October’s activities. This new format would allow greater participation since events could be planned during slow periods in certain areas.

**Federal FY 2012 Funds:** Congress has not yet approved the budget for this federal fiscal year so general heritage area federal funding is not confirmed. Additionally, last year’s funding allocations will most likely be repeated, although the NPS is analyzing how they might distribute the funds more equitably.

**Education Outreach**
Memory Seymour and Richard Hartley are working with a consultant on the LA Bicentennial curriculum and have included in that curriculum Atchafalaya lesson plans. A preview of Lesson 1 was shown by projector, which included educational goals, a vocabulary key, a test and background information. Distribution will be through teacher workshops that are scheduled as well as posted on the Bicentennial and Atchafalaya web sites.

Additional DVD copies of our video are available to Commissioners. The WBR Museum outreach is helping with distribution and provided them to 23 teachers last month, and these also will be distributed at the teacher workshops.

The National Association of Recreational Resource Planners Annual Conference (NARRP) Baton Rouge conference in April will have a session presented by C. R. Caillouet on the Atchafalaya. There are 5 field trips planned that will get the attendees traveling around most of the heritage area.

The **LA Tourism Summit** is January 24-26, 2012 in Shreveport, LA. Debra is doing a presentation on interpretive product development and will include examples from several ANHA communities.

Debra will poll about a couple of 2012 meeting date changes.

**Other Business and Commissioner Announcements**
Joe Llewellyn spoke about the Mississippi River Trail, Inc., an informal network of local, state, and federal refuge, park and trail managers, and NGO’s committed to connecting people to the MS River. Many of their initiatives reflect the Department of the Interior’s America’s Great Outdoors movement and would be a good networking opportunity for the heritage area.
Joe reported also that the ANHA video was distributed to the seven NPS sites in the Jean Lafitte National Historical Park system for their use in playing for visitors.

J. A. Rummler informed the Commission that Dr. Donald Frazier’s book *Thunder across the Swamp* has been published and is available in retail outlets. The book contains Civil War history of the Atchafalaya area. Dr. Frazier was a guest lecturer at the May 19, 2011 Commission meeting. Additionally, J. A. said he would be willing to assist with the Heritage Area’s GIS mapping needs as we moved forward with that project.

Carrie Stansbury: Eagle Expo is February 9-11, 2012.
Wilbert Carmouche: The Tunica Biloxi Resource Cultural Center had its ribbon cutting November 30.

**Julie Rose moved to adjourn the meeting. Wilbert Carmouche seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**