A regular meeting of the Atchafalaya Trace Commission (Commission), managing entity of the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area (ANHA), was held Wednesday, March 26, 2014 at 10:00 AM at Capitol Park Welcome Center in Baton Rouge.

Commissioners present:
Ascension Parish: Charles Caillouet
Avoyelles Parish: Wilbert Carmouche
Concordia Parish: Glenn McGlothlin
E. Baton Rouge Parish: Gerren Sias, Treasurer
Iberville Parish: Gene Seneca
St. Landry Parish: Pam Cannatella
Terrebonne Parish: Patrick Thomas Gordon, Secretary
West Baton Rouge Parish: Julie Rose

Commissioners absent:
Assumption Parish: Phillip Daigle, Sr.
Iberia Parish: Chris Burton
Lafayette Parish: Jennifer Ritter Guidry, Vice-chair
St. Mary Parish: Carrie Stansbury
St. Martin Parish: Position vacant.
Pointe Coupée Parish: J. A. Rummler, Chair

Others present:
Debra Credeur, Executive Director; Gerard Overhultz, Laissez Faire, Inc.; Arlana Shields, City of Franklin; Sara Krupa, Dept. of Natural Resources; Jessica Dixon, Office of State Parks; Willie Fontenot, Friends of Atchafalaya.

After the Pledge of Allegiance, Commission Secretary Gordon called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m.

Agenda Approval
Gene Seneca moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Glenn McGlothlin seconded the motion and the agenda was accepted as presented.

Approval of January 22, 2014 Meeting Minutes
Julie Rose moved to approve the January 22, 2014 regular meeting minutes. Glenn McGlothlin seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Funding Update
Debra Credeur updated the Commission on the status of the program’s federal funding. Confirmation of Federal Fiscal Year 2014 funding for National Heritage Areas (NHA’s) was received March 21, 2014. The funding breakdown for NHA’s in the Southeast Region is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arabia Mountain</td>
<td>$300,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atchafalaya</td>
<td>$300,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augusta Canal</td>
<td>$308,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Ridge</td>
<td>$690,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cane River</td>
<td>$591,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gullah Geechee</td>
<td>$300,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi Delta</td>
<td>$150,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi Hills</td>
<td>$150,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muscle Shoals</td>
<td>$150,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>$663,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee Civil War</td>
<td>$436,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the NPS proposed funding formula, NHA’s with approved Management Plans receive $300,000 annually if Congress passes a budget with sufficient funds. Older NHA’s that had achieved higher, earmarked funding levels before a
funding formula was proposed are allowed to retain that level of funding with annual reductions over three years of 12%, 14% and 20%. The formula, not yet enacted, does not address equalizing funds distribution among NHA’s beyond the third year. Note: the formula is not legislated.

Looking to the future, the President’s FY 15 budget was released March 4. While this is an initial draft and likely to undergo many changes, the entire NHA program is written in at $9 million (cut from $18 million), and, as in the past, reauthorizations for older NHA’s due to sunset are written into the appropriations bill.

Project Manager
Debra reported that she is working with Human Resources on a job description and other details for the position that was approved at the May 22, 2013 Commission meeting. The position would involve managing different programs and projects throughout the 14 parishes. A discussion ensued with Commissioners offering qualities they deem important to consider including understanding of Heritage Area mission; outdoor recreation experience; knowledge of history; knowledge of tourism and marketing; social media, public speaking and writing skills; environmental education enthusiasm; understanding of grants; ability to work with agencies and nonprofits.

Education Committee
Curriculum Distribution
With the help of LA State Museum Education staff, the Atchafalaya curriculum has been mailed to 20 Louisiana parishes including the 14 parishes in the NHA, as well as to the Louisiana Resource Center for Educators, which has a library. Ultimately, the curriculum will be sent to 1264 public schools, 385 nonpublic schools, 113 charter schools, 72 school district superintendents and 8 Catholic dioceses throughout the state.

Julie Rose pointed out a supply of the curriculum sets is needed for the annual teachers’ institute sponsored by West Baton Rouge Museum in the near future. Attendees are great spokespersons for our program and would reach a wide audience in promoting use of our curriculum.

Educational Speaker Series
The Education Committee has established a process for reviewing potential speakers and partners for future events in the Educational Series. There is $6500 remaining from what was budgeted for the series this fiscal year. Debra encouraged Commissioners to consider the museums, historical societies and other organizations in their communities for partnering opportunities.

Pat Gordon suggested we research and consider a mobile exhibit that could be circulated among the parishes’ museums and libraries.

Natural & Outdoor Resources Committee
Water & Land Heritage Trail
Debra reported the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the development of the Water & Land Trail with which the State’s legal staff is assisting was delayed and the new target date to issue the RFP is April 1. The Evaluation Committee includes J. A. Rummler, Charles Caillouet, Carrie Stansbury and Jennifer Guidry. Any Commissioner is welcome to participate. Responses to the RFP will be sent to the Evaluation Committee members for reviewing on their own schedule. A short meeting may be necessary.

BTNEP Birding Calendar
BTNEP spoke with Debra last month about partnering on the annual birding calendar for the production of the 2015 calendar for which the main theme will be ducks. Distribution of the 25,000 copies is to Audubon chapters, Ornithological Societies, visitor centers, and members of the American Birding Association with whom the ANHA has partnered on past projects. Debra recommended a $10,000 sponsorship. Pat Gordon indicated BTNEP is an organization with goals and mission very much aligned with those of ANHA.
Charles Caillouet made a motion that the ANHA provide a $10,000 sponsorship to BTNEP for the birding calendar. Glenn McGlothlin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Leave No Trace Workshops
The Leave No Trace Environmental Education team is in our area for 2 weeks. Among the groups to whom they will be providing education programs are BREC and LA State Park Managers. Additionally, an interview on “Spotlight on 5: Public Affairs Show” has been arranged. The training includes enjoying the outdoors responsibly; reducing environmental impact; respecting wildlife and reducing litter.

History & Culture Committee
Atchafalaya DVD
Debra reported the multi-lingual DVD (English voice, French voice, and Japanese, Spanish and German subtitles) will be completed in a couple weeks. An image of the opening screen was distributed.

Sustainability Committee
License Plates
Debra reported she is still investigating a process for selling the front-mounting license plates, samples which were distributed to Commissioners last meeting.

Director’s Report
- Debra reviewed the 2014 Meeting Dates: May 7, July 23, Sep. 24, Nov. 5.
- All six Commissioner appointments expiring in March have been renewed with no change in appointees.
- St. Martin Parish expects to appoint a representative within a month.
- There is interest in the DNR primitive campsites which we are also promoting. Sara Krupa from DNR was in the audience and briefed the Commission on the development and use of the sites. All sites are accessible by water.
- The U.S. Gulf Coast Geotourism Program is a collection of (so far)1,600 sites, attractions and businesses highlighting the places most respected and recommended by locals. The National Geographic web site features what’s unique about rural Louisiana, Alabama, Florida and Mississippi Louisiana. The official LOUISIANA launch of www.usgulfcoaststatesgeotourism.com is at Capitol Park Welcome Center March 27 at 1:00 pm and will feature networking and education for small tourism businesses.
- Louisiana Culture Awards nominations need to be submitted by end of today (March 26). I have applications.
- There is a one-page Atchafalaya ad in the POW-WOW handout (international tourism function) that State Tourism staff will be attending.

Other Business
Debra said there is a need for a professional ANHA display, as there is often opportunity for ANHA representation, both by staff and Commissioners, at certain events and conferences. A discussion ensued about models for indoors versus outdoors, cost estimates, etc.

Charles Caillouet made a motion to do additional research and obtain estimates and photos of displays to review at the next meeting. Gerren Sias seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
**Commissioner Announcements**

Commissioner announcements included upcoming events in the parishes, including Earth Day in several parishes, as well as the following initiatives and developments that may be of significance as our Water & Land Trail develops: West Baton Rouge: New Port Allen levee trails almost completed; Concordia: Port of Vidalia on the Mississippi River and Recreational park under development; Ascension: Ascension Comprehensive Recreational Plan, parish interest on land and water trails, Bayou Fountain cleanup, and additional canoeing waterways; Terrebonne: trail development and attractions signage; Iberville: New Bayou Sorrell boat ramp; Avoyelles: Restorative efforts on Spring Bayou, and increased interest in the area’s history behind *Twelve Years a Slave* (this will be a theme of one of the events of the Educational Series, in partnership with Avoyelles Parish).

There being no further announcements or business, Gerren Sias moved to adjourn the meeting. Glenn McGlothin seconded the motion and, passing unanimously, the meeting was adjourned.