Atchafalaya Trace Commission/
Atchafalaya National Heritage Area

September 25, 2013

A regular meeting of the Atchafalaya Trace Commission (Commission) was scheduled for Wednesday, September 25, 2013 at 10:00 AM at the Capitol Park Welcome Center in Baton Rouge.

Commissioners present:
Assumption Parish: Phillip Daigle, Sr.
Iberville Parish: Gene Seneca
Lafayette Parish: Jennifer Ritter Guidry, Vice-chair
East Baton Rouge Parish: Gerren Sias
Terrebonne Parish: Patrick Thomas Gordon, Secretary

Assistant Superintendent Joe Llewellyn of Jean Lafitte NHPP, Ex officio

Commissioners absent:
Ascension Parish: Charles Caillouet
Iberia Parish: Chris Burton
Avoyelles Parish: Wilbert Carmouche
Concordia Parish: Glenn McGlothin
Pointe Coupée Parish: J. A. Rummel, Chair
St. Landry Parish: Pam Cannatella
St. Mary Parish: Carrie Stansbury, Treasurer
West Baton Rouge Parish: Julie Rose
St. Martin Parish: Vacant seat

Others present:
Debra Credeur, Executive Director, Atchafalaya NHA
Gerard Overhultz, Laissez Faire, Inc.
Willie Fontenot, Friends of Atchafalaya
Art Hawkins, Evangeline Area Council, Boy Scouts of America
Ben Pierce, Evangeline Area Council, Boy Scouts of America

The number of Commissioners in attendance did not constitute a quorum.

An informal discussion was held about projects and activities:

Art Hawkins and Ben Pierce informed the Commission of the Atchafalaya Basin Scout Program, which includes a Boy Scout 100-year commitment of a service project of preserving, protecting and promoting the Atchafalaya Basin. Activities include litter abatement, recreation opportunities, and care of the ecosystem. Program pillars include native vegetation planting, wildlife habitat creation, trash removal and a high-adventure scout program tied to earning badges. The first season of high adventure treks that includes paddling, hiking, culture and ecosystem study has been completed with success. A temporary base for participants has been established while fundraising and planning for the permanent Atchafalaya Swamp Base is underway. Art and Ben pointed out the mission and goals of this program overlap with those of the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area and there
may be many ways the two organizations can work together, especially tied to the Atchafalaya curriculum the Heritage Area recently had approved by BESE.

Other items discussed were:

- Speaker series, which may begin to incorporate natural and outdoor resources with hosting partners next year in addition to some history-related presentations which have had good attendance this year.
- The October 3 Civil War music concert by Bobby Horton
- Research on the land and water tour
- The BESE approval of the curriculum which is undergoing printing now
- Committee name changes to reflect the broader scope of NHA activities
- The next Commission meeting is November 20 (3rd Wednesday)
- January 22, March 26, May 28, July 23, September 24 & Nov. 19 are 2014 Meeting Dates and will be posted on the web UNLESS THERE IS AN OBJECTION VOICED IN THE NEXT WEEK
- Heritage Area Boundaries – definition as it appears in the legislation
- It appears Congress will declare a continuing resolution so the new FY funding may again take many months to be confirmed.
- Window decals and miniature signs for use at trade shows and displays are being distributed.
- *Birder’s Guide to Louisiana* is available online. Hardcopies can be ordered through Amazon (see ordering link on Atchafalaya.org). The American Birding Association is establishing a procedure to receive information for updates.
- Litter Issues: The LG delivered the keynote speech at the Keep Louisiana Beautiful conference last week and used Atchafalaya Basin examples. While we embrace the Leave No Trace philosophy, ideas were explored how we can become more visible with our message.
- Experience Atchafalaya Days: October proclaimed “Atchafalaya Month;” promoting cultural and outdoors events
- Japan Promotion: Nature-based tourism market; State presence at Japanese Association of Travel Agents – largest Asian travel association; articles in Japanese Flyfishing Magazine; there is interest in subtitling Atchafalaya DVD.
- *Birdwatching Magazine* -- there is a cooperative ad opportunity through LTPA