



BAYOU TECHE PADDLE TRAIL

La Trace Pagaie de Bayou Teche

BAYOU TÊCHE PADDLE TRAIL PLANNING 2012-2017

PREPARED BY

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

CENTER FOR CULTURAL AND ECO-TOURISM, UL LAFAYETTE

TECHE ECOLOGY, CULTURE AND HISTORY EDUCATION PROJECT

SEPTEMBER 2012

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PLANNING ORGANIZATION

This Bayou Têche Paddle Trail (BTPT) Plan provides for a community-supported water trail along the Bayou Têche in St. Landry, St. Martin, Iberia and St. Mary parishes, Louisiana. The Bayou Têche Paddle Trail Steering Committee prepared this document, in partnership with the National Park Service, Center for Cultural and Eco-Tourism at UL Lafayette, TECHE Project and Acadiana Resource Conservation and Development. The Bayou Têche Paddle Trail Steering Committee is a volunteer, ad hoc organization consisting of public and private entities with stakeholder interest in promoting historic preservation, conservation, environmental education, low-impact recreation and heritage tourism in St. Landry, St. Martin, Iberia and St. Mary parishes.

2010-2012 PARTICIPATING AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- National Park Service Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- Sovereign Nation of the Chitimacha Tribe
- Center for Cultural and Eco-Tourism, University of Louisiana at Lafayette (CCET)
- Têche-Vermilion Fresh Water District
- Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
- St. Landry Parish Government*
- St. Martin Parish Government*
- Iberia Parish Government*
- St. Mary Parish Government*
- St. Mary Levee Board District
- Têche Ecology, Culture and History Education Project (TECHE Project)

**includes parish government, sheriff department and tourist commission*

2010-2012 BAYOU TÊCHE PADDLE TRAIL STEERING COMMITTEE

- Stacye Palmer McBride, National Park Service
- Kim Walden, THPO, Sovereign Nation of the Chitimacha Tribe
- Jennifer Ritter Guidry, Center for Cultural and Eco-Tourism, University of Louisiana at Lafayette
- Roxsan Godeau, St. Landry Parish
- Eddie Bienvenue, St. Martin Parish
- Anne Dugas, Iberia Parish, small business interests
- Donovan Garcia, St. Mary Parish, recreation interests
- Dan Hidalgo, Agriculture interests
- Shawn Jolet, Lafayette Paddle Club
- Trey Snyder, Têche Ecology, Culture and History Education Project
- Kristen Kordecki, Têche Ecology, Culture and History Education Project
- John Williams, Pack and Paddle, low impact recreation and small business interests
- Cory Werk, Bayou Têche Experience, low impact recreation and small business interests

BAYOU TÊCHE PADDLE TRAIL MISSION STATEMENT

Bayou Têche Paddle Trail promotes enjoyment and conservation of the natural, cultural, and historical landscape of Bayou Têche in St. Landry, St. Martin, Iberia and St. Mary parishes by encouraging responsible and quality low-impact recreation, improved public access and amenities, and environmental education through citizen-led partnerships. The three themes are:

- Human-powered, low-impact recreation
- Water quality improvement and education
- Small business development along the waterway



Initial meeting of potential partners, Breaux Bridge, 2009.
Image courtesy of Ken Grissom.

PLANNING GOALS

The Bayou Têche Paddle Trail stretches 130 miles from Port Barre to Patterson through St. Landry, St. Martin, Iberia and St. Mary parishes. Each parish features easy-access landings and boat launches with park amenities. We recognize Patterson, at mile 130, as the terminus of the paddle trail due to accommodations not currently available at the Berwick Lock. This document outlines

- Plans to improve or build boat launches and information kiosks
- Needs and locations of water spigots, restroom facilities, camping opportunities and other resources
- Directional signage needs on state and parish roadways and on Bayou Têche at or nearby bridges
- Efficient ways to inform paddlers about local accommodations

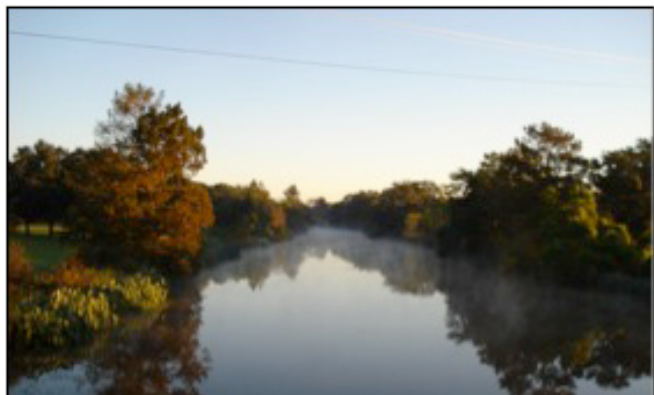
Environmental, cultural and historical education is a priority and the BTPT plan includes needed education materials, education/information kiosks and effective ways to inform paddlers about cultural and historic sites and museums. Paddle trail development will be completed over a 5-year period and will be funded through both public and private funds.

PLANNING OBJECTIVES

Directed by citizens of St. Landry, St. Martin, Iberia and St. Mary parishes, the Bayou Têche Paddle Trail Steering

Committee represents public and private interests and submits this plan to the National Park Service in order to:

- Promote awareness about human-powered recreation opportunities
- Define a safe, integrated system of public access points along Bayou Têche
- Assist in identifying sufficient project funding
- Encourage diverse and broad-based community participation in the project
- Promote environmental education and commitment to improved water quality
- Identify opportunities to learn about cultural, natural, and historic resources
- Define pathways for cooperation with other local nature-based tourism initiatives to contribute to the economic climate of St. Landry, St. Martin, Iberia and St. Mary parishes
- List organizations to support project design, development, funding, and maintenance



The Bayou Têche.
Image courtesy of Mike Van Etten.

THE BAYOU TÊCHE

LOCATION

The Bayou Têche watershed is a small watershed within the Mississippi River Basin, draining approximately 58,500 acres of natural, agriculture and urban lands into Vermilion Bay. Bayou Têche runs 136 miles from Port Barre to Berwick through St. Landry, St. Martin, Iberia and St. Mary parishes and is easily accessed from several state highways and Interstate 10. Port Barre and Breaux Bridge are approximately 60 minutes from Baton Rouge. Lafayette is the closest mid-sized city, accessed by Greyhound and Amtrak in Lafayette, I-10/I-49, Lafayette and Baton Rouge airports. A list of existing amenities and needed improvements is compiled in Appendix B. For a list of annual festivals located near Bayou Têche, please see Appendix C.

ATCHAFALAYA NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

The Atchafalaya River Basin first began forming around 900 AD when the mighty Mississippi River abandoned its easternmost channel and flowed for approximately 1,000 years to occupy the present course of Bayou Têche. Over

time, natural levees formed along the river to trap early overflow thus forming a lake within the middle, bounded by a densely forested area.

Early development of the Atchafalaya Basin hinged on the Bayou Têche. Before roads, Bayou Têche, not the Atchafalaya, was the highway from the Gulf of Mexico into the heart of Louisiana. The Têche was navigable over 100 miles, yet just wide enough, deep enough, or swift enough to maneuver. Several Bayou Têche settlements materialized because the bayou gave communities the ability to transport timber, seafood and agricultural products.

Today, Bayou Têche is cradled within the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area. At least 300 species of birds, including the largest wintering population of American woodcock in North America. Over 50,000 egrets, ibises and herons nest in the Floodway, including the largest nesting concentration of bald eagles in the south-central United States. The American alligator along with 54 other species of reptiles and amphibians can also be found in the Basin. Over 90 species of fish, crawfish, crab and shrimp support Louisiana's seafood industry.



LEGEND OF THE BAYOU TÊCHE

The Legend of the Bayou Têche as told by the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana:

Many years ago, in the days of the Tribe's strength, there was a huge and venomous snake. This snake was so large, and so long, that its size was not measured in feet, but in miles. Its head was at what is now known as Morgan City and its tail at Port Barre. This enormous snake had been an enemy of the Chitimacha for many years, because of its destruction to many of their ways of life. One day, the Chitimacha chief called together his warriors, and had them prepare themselves for a battle with their enemy. In those days, there were no guns that could be used to kill this snake. All they had were clubs and bows and arrows, with arrowheads made of large bones from the garfish.



Commemorative plaque of the Chitimacha legend of the Bayou Têche, Breaux Bridge.
Image courtesy of Adam Doucet.

Of course, a snake over ten miles long could not be instantly killed. The warriors fought courageously to kill the enemy, but the snake fought just as hard to survive. As the beast turned and twisted in the last few days of a slow death, he broadened, curved and deepened the place wherein his huge body lay. The Bayou Têche is proof of the exact position into which this enemy placed himself when overcome by the Chitimacha warriors.

An 1879 description of the Têche Region from Confederate General Richard Taylor is still apparent in the bayou's current geography.

A few miles above the railway terminus at Berwick's there enters from the west the Têche, loveliest of Southern streams. Navigable for more than a hundred miles, preserving at all seasons an equal breadth and depth, so gentle is its flow that it might be taken for a canal, did not the charming and graceful curves, by which it separates the undulating prairies of Atakapa from the alluvion of the Atchafalaya, mark it as the handiwork of Nature. Before the war, the Têche for fifty miles, from Berwick's Bay to New Iberia, passed through one field of sugar canes, the fertile and well-cultivated estates succeeding each other. The mansions of the opulent planters, as well as the villages of their slaves, were situated on the west bank of the bayou overlooking the broad, verdant prairie, where countless herds roamed. On the east bank, the dense forest had given way to fields of luxuriant canes; and to connect the two parts of estates, floating bridges were constructed, with openings in the center for the passage of steamers. Stately live oaks, the growth of centuries, orange groves, and flowers of every hue and fragrance surrounded the abodes of the seigneurs; while within, one found the grace of the

salon combined with the healthy cheeriness of country life. Abundance and variety of game encouraged field sports, and the waters, fresh and salt, swarmed with fish. With the sky and temperature of Sicily, the breezes from prairie and Gulf were as health-giving as those that ripple the heather on Scotch moors. In all my wanderings, and they have been many and wide, I cannot recall so fair, so bountiful, and so happy a land.

COMMUNITIES OF THE BAYOU TÊCHE

Bayou Têche begins at **Port Barre** in St. Landry Parish, a French trading post where Jean Joseph LeKentrick, probably the first European to venture into the area and stay, traded whiskey with the Opelousas Indians for furs, bear grease, and other goods. LeKentrick was one of a group of men who were called *coureurs de bois*, or woods runners, during the early days of French settlement in south Louisiana. They were traders who avoided established trading posts to go into the woods and deal with the native tribes individually. LeKentrick eventually settled in the area and married the widow of Jacques Guillaume Courtableau. Madam Courtableau apparently inherited whatever holdings the older trader had in the area. In 1820, Courtableau sold land at the site to Charles Barre. At first



Historical marker on Hwy 190.
Image courtesy of Kristen Kordecki.

Barre operated only a trading post, but as steamboat traffic began to find its way up the Têche to the town of Washington, north and west of Port Barre on Bayou Courtabeau, the site became known as Barre's Landing. During the American Revolution the trading post here was the staging area for the Opelousas militia and their Indian allies as they prepared to cross the Atchafalaya swamp to Baton Rouge, where they joined an army led by Bernardo de Galvez and fought and defeated the British.

Leonville began as a settlement of *gens de couleur libres*, free men of color, the principal families being the Lemelles, Auzennes, Rideaus and Frilots. The community got its name from the Catholic Church, named for St. Leon by the first pastor, Father Leon Mailluchet, who built the first church around 1898.



Sign at Leonville boat launch.
Image courtesy of Adam Doucet.

Arnaudville was once the site of an Atakapa Indian village on the southern edge of some 6,500 acres of land sold by the Atakapa to Fuselier de la Clair, one of the earliest settlers on Bayou Têche. That established the development

of La Muriere (or Mulberry Plantation), then La Jonction (for the junction of the bayous), and finally Arnaudville, for the family who made the town prosperous. Antoine Arnaud, another very early French settler in St. Landry Parish, acquired the land at the junction of the bayous, at the time considered the head of navigation on the Têche. As such, it became a port and crossroads for settlers coming to south Louisiana and those continuing westward to Texas. There is an old "steamboat turnaround" south of the junction, a slip cut into the bayou that allowed boats to back into them so that they could turn around in the narrow bayou and head back downstream.

Pierre Guidry was the first settler of **Cecilia** when he acquired three tracts of land in 1791 from Mrs. Joseph Alexander Declouet. Soon thereafter, Joseph Angelle also settled in the region. As more and more settlers populated the land along the northern Bayou Têche in St. Martin Parish, there was a need for easier access to religious services, education and trade. Therefore, the region now known as Cecilia grew because of its strategic location between St. Martinville and Opelousas. Cecilia and Breaux Bridge inhabitants developed a closeness because of lan-



Sign at Cecilia bridge over the Bayou Têche.
Image courtesy of Adam Doucet.

guage, family ties, trade, and religious affiliations. In fact, in 1841, a small chapel constructed by Breaux Bridge citizens served both communities. Thus, the two communities' ties were reinforced and continued to flourish.

There are several versions in circulation concerning the origin of the name of "Cecilia." Perhaps the most probable story is that Cecilia was named after the first postmistress, Cecilia Lastrapes. When the postal officials rejected the name "La Place," Cecilia's first name was used for the post office address. Thus, the name for the community evolved. Cecilia is the birthplace of some famous Louisiana political figures, such as Robert "Bob" Angelle and former Lt. Governor Paul Hardy. It is also the burial place for General Louis Hebert, a Civil War general.

Breaux Bridge is named for Firmin Breaux, who built a foot bridge across the Têche in 1799. Firmin was born in old Acadie in the Maritime Provinces of Canada and his family was one of those deported by the British in 1755. His family was sent to Boston and Firmin eventually made his way to Louisiana, thus one of the early Acadians, or Cajuns, to settle in this area. Sometime after 1815 one of Firmin's sons, Agricole, built a larger bridge that could accommodate carts and wagons. Because of this, Breaux Bridge was the only city on the Têche to evolve on both sides at the same time.



Pavilion at Breaux Bridge boat launch.
Image courtesy of Adam Doucet.

After Agricole's death in 1828, his wife, Scholastique, faced financial difficulties and so had a Plat de la Ville du Pont des Breaux drawn up and proceeded to sell lots, and she is therefore credited as the founder of the town. Breaux Bridge was incorporated in 1859. By 1890, historian William Henry Perrin found Breaux Bridge to be a town that "has increased rapidly in population and wealth...[and] noted for the energy, politeness and hospitality of its inhabitants, who are mostly of French origin."

The **Parks** area was one of the first places to be settled by the Acadians upon their arrival in this area in 1765. It was first called La Pointe de Repos by the Cajuns, "the rest-

ing point.” St. John-Levert Plantation was built in 1828 by Alexandre Etienne de Clouet and is still a working plantation today. Early records indicate families such as Bienvenu and Wiltz (Pointe Coupée area) settling along the Bayou Têche; taking advantage of the fertile land. The area was primarily settled by free people of color and remains home to many Creoles who continue to speak the language. The Parks area was also home to well-known storyteller Wilson “Ben Guiné” Mitchell, who provided hours of storytelling and insight to researchers in the 1970s.

Currently, the University of Louisiana at Lafayette Department of Anthropology is leading research on a Creole cemetery in **Promiseland** (just east of Parks, across the bayou), which consists of unmarked graves. Only one plot, of a Confederate soldier by the name of Telephore Frederick, bears a tombstone. The mystery as to why a Confederate soldier would be buried among Creoles has yet to be solved, though the curiosity continues to drive researchers. Longfellow-Evangeline State Park was the first state park in the Louisiana state system and is named for the fictional heroine of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s epic poem about the dispersion of the Acadians and Evangeline’s forced separation from her fiancé just days before they were to be wed.

St. Martinville began as a French colonial outpost, the Poste des Atakapa, in the early eighteenth century. Several hundred Acadians settled here in 1765, sent by the then-Spanish government of Louisiana to raise cattle to support the growing New Orleans population. St. Martin de Tours Catholic Church is one of the oldest in south Louisiana, bearing an inscription of its 1765 establishment with the arrival of the Acadians. Some aristocrats fleeing the French Revolution also found their way to St. Martinville, as did, later, exiles from Napoleon’s army, adding to the town’s distinctive French character and contributing to stories of an opulent lifestyle in pre-Civil War days, when it was known as “Petit Paris.”

Keystone Lock, three miles south of St. Martinville, has been used since the early 1900s to keep the bayou’s water high enough for commercial traffic. The locks were com-



Keystone Lock opening from the south.
Image courtesy of Jennifer Ritter Guidry.

pleted in 1913, when boats were getting deeper but the bayou was losing water for agricultural purposes, dropping the bayou levels year-by-year. The Lock and Dam are currently under review for National Register of Historic Places inclusion/status.

Originally known as Picouville, after the family name Picou, **Loreauville** now owes its name to Ozaire Loreu who, around 1871, donated property for a Catholic Church, cemetery, and also aided in the agricultural, industrial, and political growth of the village. Though property was primarily owned by French, some Acadians later settled in this area. In 1899, and with a population of 291 citizens, Loreauville built its first bridge across the Bayou Têche.



Boat on the Bayou Têche near New Iberia.
Image courtesy of Jennifer Ritter Guidry.

The first railroad was constructed by Adrien Gonsoulin and was used to transport sugar cane from his plantation to his saw mill, making him another important figure in the industrial growth of Loreauville.

In 1927, the entire town had to be evacuated due to a heavy ice and snow melt from the north. The flood waters traveled into the Old Red River channel and eventually inundated New Iberia, Loreauville, and many other villages along the bayou. After the water receded, the town picked up again, diversifying their economy with oil, lumber and boat building. Despite the industrial progress of the village, Loreauville did not have its first blacktop road until the 1960s. Recently, old maps and notes on the area have been examined, showing the documentation of a ten-foot waterfall which existed over 200 years ago just between Loreauville and New Iberia. Though its remnants are hardly noticeable, if at all, the coulée that fed the waterfall still exists under the name Bayou la Chûte (chûte is French for “waterfall”).

New Iberia was settled largely by emigrants recruited by Francisco Bouligny of southern Spain, particularly in the province of Malaga. With Bouligny, about 80 Malagueños, 75 black slaves and a handful of soldiers traveled to the Têche in the spring of 1779 to look for a likely place to settle, eventually deciding on an area with a slight bluff that guarded against spring floods. In the early 1800s, this

became an important steamboat stop on the Têche. It was incorporated as a town in 1839 and was made the parish seat in 1868, when Iberia Parish separated from St. Martin Parish. According to an account written in 1871, the town then sported several life and fire insurance companies, sewing machine agencies, ice companies, a cotton seed mill, lumber mill and soap factory, as well as the famous Tabasco plant at nearby Avery Island.

Jeanerette has a rich, colorful history dating back to the American Indians. Jeanerette was part of a borderland between two main Indian groups, the Atakapa and Chitimacha. According to the *American State Papers*, Pierre Zerangue originally procured the land on which Jeanerette now lies from the Spanish government. Zerangue received an "order of survey and settlement" from Spain for 1,052 acres. Under Spanish law, if a man occupied a piece of property for two years he could apply for title to the land under an "order of survey settlement." Similar land procurement was made by three other parties but the properties were united by Nicholas Provost. Born around 1743 in Kaskashia, Illinois territory, Provost secured the property from the present-day experimental farm to the St. Mary Parish line. He engaged in sugar cultivation until his death in 1816.

John W. Jeanerette came to the Têche country from South Carolina in the 1820s. When he first arrived he worked as a tutor at one of the large plantations in the area. A year later, he opened a store and a saloon. In 1830 Jeanerette purchased the Pine Grove Plantation, known as Beau Pré, located just north of the present-day city of Jeanerette. The town became the center of an extensive agricultural district and then an important mill town for cypress lumber that was harvested in the nearby Atchafalaya Basin and towed in giant rafts up the Têche to mills along the bayou. For nearly 200 years, sugar production has been the financial backbone of Jeanerette. The city was incorporated in 1878 and Joseph E. Provost became the first mayor.

Around 500 AD, the final vestiges of the vast Roman Empire were disappearing from Europe, ushering in the beginning of modern history. Around the same time some 7,000 miles away on another continent, the **Chitimacha** were beginning to settle on land around the bayous of what is now Southern Louisiana. The Chitimacha lived in peace and tranquility for hundreds of years. In the early 1700s, marauding bands of heavily-armed Frenchmen, often allied with Acolapissa Indians and other tribes, began slaving raids that touched off conflicts which escalated into a devastating twelve-year war for the Chitimacha. In 1727, the Chitimacha settlement was discovered west of the Mississippi River, although many had thought that the entire tribe was either destroyed or enslaved as a result of the long war. Several years later, more Chitimacha were found living near what is now known as **Charenton**, Louisiana, the site of today's Chitimacha Reservation.

Over the following hundred years, further encroachment from French, Spanish and United States settlers hampered renewed growth of the remaining Chitimacha. In the mid-1800s, the Chitimacha were forced to sue the United States



Two women displaying their woven baskets.
Image courtesy of the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana.

for confirmation of title to the tribal land. This resulted in a governmental decree establishing an area of 1,062 acres as Chitimacha land. In subsequent years, taxation forced sales and continued litigation reduced that amount to 260 acres. In the face of hardships and the rigors of prejudice and discrimination during the first half of the 20th century, the Chitimacha held fast to what remained of their original homeland, and became the only tribe in Louisiana to have remained on original tribal land. Today, about 350 Tribal members live on the Chitimacha Reservation in Charenton. Total Tribal membership is approximately 950.

The town of **Franklin** was a major participant in the transport of freight in that either the ship and/or company was out of Franklin or the ship itself was built in Franklin. Established in the early nineteenth century and originally called Carlin's Settlement, Franklin was the first town founded in St. Mary Parish. The town is named after Benjamin Franklin, became parish seat in 1811, and was incorporated in 1820. With the coming of the steamboat, Franklin became an important port for sugar. The lumber industry and ship building also flourished in the area along with the development of sawmills and railroads. Many towns in Louisiana present a melting pot of culture and Franklin is no exception. Early settlers ranged from French, Acadian, African, German, Danish, and Anglo-Saxon.

Due to limited paved roads (less than 100 miles by 1900), the waterways in Louisiana were the main means of transportation of goods. The old houses along the Bayou Têche face the water for this reason. The Bayou Têche was so much of an important transportation route that nearly half of the cargo moved up the Mississippi had begun its journey in the Têche. In 1905, the Albert Hanson Lumber Company constructed the **Hanson Canal**. The canal was built to remove cypress from the delta and transport it into

the Bayou Têche where it was brought to the lumber mills along the Têche. The remains of the southwest lock are 700 feet down the Hanson Canal and are visible from the Têche. It was one of the first man-made inland waterways between Franklin and Mermentau. The canal was not only used for logging but to also transport oil, sugar, salt, sulfur, indigo, and cattle.

Irish Bend was named for Irishman Alexander Porter, who built his antebellum home in the bayou's bend. This was the scene of a Civil War skirmish in 1863 that was described as "sharp, obstinate, and bloody," as a Union army pushed up Bayou Têche to clear the area of Confederate troops that could threaten New Orleans, which had been taken by the Union in late summer 1862. The Battle of Bisland (Union victory) or Battle of Corney's Bridge (won by the Confederates) took place at the present-day Calumet Cut or Wax Lake Outlet in 1863. The Confederate gunboat *Cotton* took on four Union boats at this location: the *Kinsman*, *Estrella*, *Diana*, and *Calhoun*. The *Cotton* met its match against these boats and was sunk at Wax Lake Outlet. Nearly seven months later, the gunboat *Diana* (now Confederate) met her fate when General Cuvier Grover destroyed the ship just 1.5 miles north of Franklin at Nerson's Woods. Most of the sunken Civil War boats were cleaned out post-war, however one is still in a process of preservation. Located in New Iberia, the steamboat *Tom Sugg* sits buried under four feet of mud.

At **Patterson**, the state's Wedell-Williams Aviation Museum preserves and documents artifacts and airplanes connected with the state's aviation history. During the Civil War, **Morgan City**, then known as Brashear City was a strategic point, being the terminus of the only railroad in south Louisiana, running from here to Algiers on the west bank of the Mississippi River and also offering a harbor deep enough for large steamboats to reach. In more recent years it has emerged as a strategic stepping-off point for

the offshore oil industry in the Gulf of Mexico. It is named for Charles Morgan, the railroad and shipping magnate who developed the channel and port facilities and who established one of the first and most important fleets of steamships plying routes from New York to New Orleans, Galveston, and other Gulf of Mexico ports.



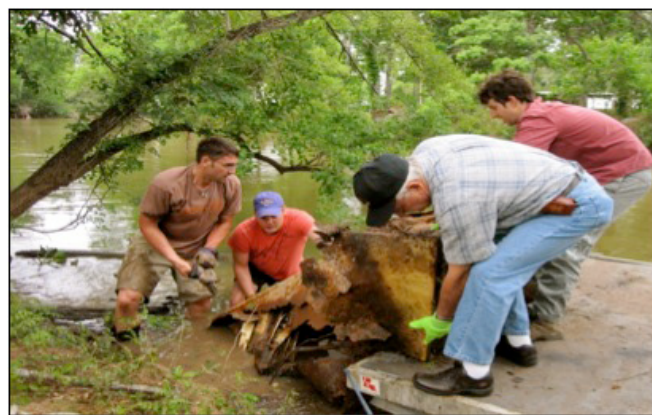
Lower Bayou Têche, near Patterson.
December 1990.

Image courtesy of the Center for Louisiana Studies, UL Lafayette.

PROJECT HISTORY

WATERSHED IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING

In 2008, Acadiana RC&D launched development of a Watershed Implementation Plan to help the communities and municipalities in the Bayou Têche watershed that address water quality, conservation practices and environmental education. With Cajuns for Bayou Têche, a volunteer program of the TECHE Project, community efforts began to build to restore Bayou Têche. While project implementation is continuous, the planning process, funded by Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality for St. Landry and St. Martin parishes concluded in September 2012. The final plan will be available on the LDEQ website in December 2012. The plan highlights *Tour du Têche* and the Bayou Têche Paddle Trail as an education tool for visitors and residents in the watershed and highlights the inherent ecological value and cultural and historic resource that is Bayou Têche.



Blake Couvillion, Marc Broussard, Port Barre Mayor Gil Savoy and Richard Burgess hauling debris out of the Bayou Têche.

Image courtesy Ken Grissom.

GRASSROOTS BEGINNINGS

The first annual *Tour du Têche*'s success determined the need for a permanent paddle trail. Volunteers from the TECHE Project, Kiwanis du Pont Breau and Acadiana RC&D agreed to pursue resources that would help facilitate a planning and marketing strategy to implement a formal paddle trail. In October 2010, the TECHE Project and the Center for Cultural and Eco-Tourism (CCET) at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette qualified for planning assistance through the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program. An NPS representative led two years of planning efforts with CCET and TECHE Project as the co-managers of the project. Capitalizing on two years of public meetings with communities, parish governments and state agencies to plan for water quality improvement projects and *Tour du Têche* preparations, the Bayou Têche Paddle Trail planning document presents the communities' vision for the Bayou Têche Paddle Trail.

EMERGENCE OF ANNUAL *TOUR DU TÊCHE* RACE

Tour du Têche, an annual kayak and canoe race begun in 2010, is now a highly-organized staged adventure race for both professional and amateur paddlers. The brainchild of local author and journalist, Ken Grissom, race planning attracted a handful of enthusiastic volunteers. Initially a program of the TÊCHE Project, *Tour du Têche* grew into an international 130-mile long paddle race that focuses not just on low-impact recreation but education about the ecology, culture and history in the watershed. Through coordinated street and water-side festivals along the race route, the race allows towns to highlight not just the scenic waterway, but the food, music and artisanal accomplishments of the Bayou Têche communities to visitors and residents alike.



Inaugural *Tour du Têche* trailhead at Port Barre.
Image courtesy Kristen Kordecki.

NATURE-BASED TOURISM

The Têche's flat and smooth water flow allows for a wide range of paddle activities, from kayaks and canoes, to paddle boats and SUPs (Stand Up Paddleboard). In addition, the extended length of the bayou with numerous cities and towns along the banks provide opportunities for part-day to multi-day paddling. Each visitor can design an experience based on watercraft, skill level and land excursions. For example, taking a paddle boat out for an hour might be what a family with young children prefer. On the other hand, a young couple with "adventure" in mind might do a multi-day kayak trip between cities.

The Bayou Têche Paddle Trail is built on the idea that human-powered, low-impact recreational activities facilitate a greater appreciation for the ecological, cultural and historic preservation in the watershed. Self-guided excursions have proven to be an effective tool for children and adults to engage and develop short and long-term commitments to support community conservation efforts. Other reports examined attitudes about nature-based tourism in the state of Louisiana and determined upper-income tourists will not travel to Louisiana as a nature-based tourism destination. More likely, the authors demonstrated, family

size and relative location to Louisiana influenced tourism. Additionally, the research hypothesis confirmed local attitudes about the environment negatively influenced people's travel decisions.

A new approach to conserving the Louisiana landscape has developed in the subsequent years. In 2006, Louisiana State University published an overview of nature-based tourism to characterize this particular sector of the state's tourism industry and identify opportunities and challenges for its continued development. In 2011, Acting Lieutenant Governor Scott Angelle identified nature-based as a priority for Louisiana and the Department of Culture Recreation and Tourism has dedicated resources to growing this tourism sector.

The Bayou Têche offers many opportunities to develop nature-based tourism. The water provides habitat for diverse flora and fauna and the bayou flows along a corridor of small towns. Cities, bridges, homes and industry all are an important part of Bayou Têche. Nature-based tourism, however, is not to be confused with ecotourism. In Martha Honey's book, *Ecotourism and Sustainable Development*, she writes that ecotourism is "...travel to fragile, pristine and usually protected areas that strive to be low impact and (usually) small scale." Louisiana's natural resources are serene and abundant. Responsible recreation and business along the Bayou Têche will ensure it becomes an ever popular destination for visitors and residents alike. The Bayou Têche is a natural platform to unite civilization with nature.



Paddling Bayou Têche.
Image courtesy of Danny Frazier.

Currently there are an unknown number of marked and maintained paddle trail miles in Louisiana. Atchafalaya Basin paddle trails are managed by USACE and St. Mary Parish Tourism Commission has mapped and promotes approximately 205 miles of paddle trails in the parish. Specific information about many trails or paddling opportunities are primarily found at citizen paddle club websites or local recreation businesses. National Park Service and LSU's AgCenter are working to inventory paddle trail op-

portunities so human-powered outdoor recreation can be better developed throughout the state.

In the spring of 2012, LSU AgCenter announced the creation of three canoeing trails in North Louisiana. The trails were established at Poverty Point State Park north of Rayville, Tensas Wildlife Refuge near Tallulah and on Bayou Bartholomew near Bastrop. The trails give visitors another reason to stay at a state park longer, according to Assistant Secretary of State Parks Stuart Johnson. "The paddling trails developed from the historic site to the Poverty Point Reservoir State Park will demonstrate the potential for economic development and tourism in the area." This concurrent development further emphasizes the immediate need for paddle trails to stimulate regional growth.



Crawfish Festival in Breaux Bridge, 1976.
Image courtesy of the Center for Louisiana Studies, UL Lafayette.

Recreation partners provide significant social leverage when addressing environmental education and outdoor recreation. An informal relationship was developed between the TECHE Project and Transportation Recreation Alternatives in Louisiana (TRAIL), the community organization responsible for the vision and portions of implementation of a multi-use trail. The Lafayette Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), whose study area includes Breaux Bridge, portions of St. Martin Parish, New Iberia, Loreauville and portions of Iberia Parish, provides technical assistance to TRAIL in developing and executing portions of their plan. The Atakapa-Ishak Trail is a multi-phased, multi-use trail that will, in part, connect Lafayette to the nearby communities of Breaux Bridge and St. Martinville. The trail is named in honor of the Atakapa-Ishak Native American tribe who inhabited the SE Texas and SW Louisiana coastal region, including the prairies from St. Martinville to Opelousas. Phase I of the AI Trail consists of shared roadway, a bike lane and a shared sidewalk (for both bikes and pedestrians) and connects downtown Lafayette to Beaver Park and the Vermilion River. This five-year plan prioritizes BTPT efforts to dovetail projects with TRAIL including maps, public outreach, educational kiosks and access points where the BTPT and AI trail are close in proximity. This expands the human-powered rec-

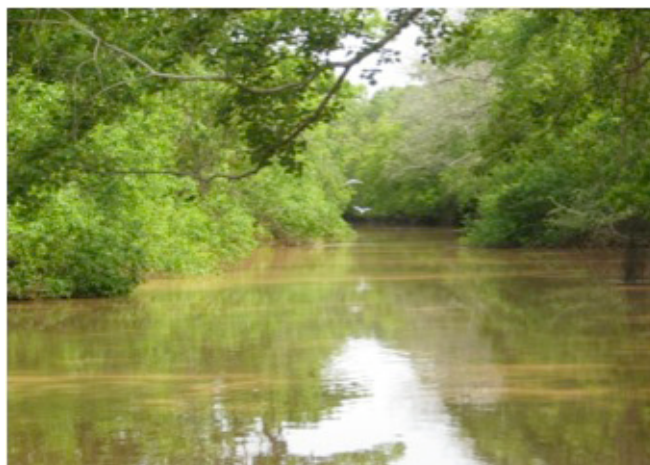
reation trail concept to include paddle, bicycle and walking/running trails side by side for approximately 20 miles.

Recognizing that this paddle trail is capable of becoming an economic driver for small towns along Bayou Têche, small business incubators and tourist commissions should play an important role in assisting new and existing relevant businesses (like restaurants, bed and breakfasts and general stores) adapt to the new needs of paddlers. The plan describes and identifies accommodations relevant to paddlers in an effort to assist local businesses in attracting adventure tourists. The plan may also help municipalities determine the roles public parks can play to accommodate paddler needs such as appropriate launches, secure boat lock-ups, access to potable water, restrooms and safe camping facilities.

RESOURCES AND CHALLENGES

The Bayou Têche Paddle Trail plan is one that captures organizational, educational, financial and environmental needs. The plan is the result of all parishes and partnering organizations leveraging financial and technical resources effectively in a cooperative spirit. The plan also recognizes that not all identified needs or projects will be implemented in the face of financial, technical and managerial restrictions. Nonetheless, the plan will attempt to identify achievable goals and projects for each phase while recognizing the iterative process of such challenges.

Currently, Bayou Têche has thirteen public cement boat launches that can accommodate motorized and non-motorized watercraft. Some launches are in need of repair while others have been built in recent years. Kayak or canoe specific launches are not available except at the Port Barre RV Park. Four full restroom facilities, including flushing toilets and running water, are available to boaters along the way in the towns of Port Barre, Parks, St. Martinville and New Iberia. Temporary portable toilets may be available at other locations. Two official camping facilities are available to RVs and tents in Port Barre and Parks. Bayou Têche Paddle Trail plan identifies and maps these



Bayou Têche in St. Martinville.
Image courtesy of Penny Blair.



Blake Couvillion and crew cleaning up on the Bayou Têche.
Image courtesy of Ken Grissom.

resources and helps find the means by which to implement improvements.

Challenges in completing the Bayou Têche Paddle Trail are based on Steering Committee input and feedback at public meetings. The challenges are primarily rudimentary development issues in all four parishes, but also include consistent education and information along the BTPT, partnership cooperation and participation, messaging, promotions and ultimately, funding. Safety improvements and signage need to be addressed at Keystone Lock and Dam (St. Martin Parish Government), Calumet Cut and the water control structure at Loreauville (TVFWD) and at the gates at Wax Lake Outlet (USACE & SMLBD). Permanent and maintained portages are ideal for Keystone Lock and Dam and at the gates at Wax Lake Outlet. For a comprehensive list of public concerns and dates and locations of Steering Committee and public meetings, see Appendix D.

DEBRIS AND INVASIVE SPECIES

Anthropogenic and natural debris continue to cause problems on Bayou Têche for both *Tour du Têche* and the Bayou Têche Paddle Trail. However, Cajuns for Bayou Têche has found considerable success in partnering with parish sheriffs, private corporations and volunteer organizations to address the problem of dumping and encroachment. As of November 2011, parish agencies and volunteers have removed and discarded over 40 tons of garbage.

The issues of household garbage is primarily seen in St. Landry and St. Martin parishes while the issue of *Eichhornia crassipes*, water hyacinth and sometimes locally known as “lilies,” are found from Port Barre to Berwick in all four parishes. *Eichhornia crassipes* is a non-native invasive fresh water aquatic plant species originating from South America. It floats in mats, reproduces both sexually (seed) and asexually (by runners). It was introduced as a horticulture plant for household water gardens and ponds. In the upper parishes, the Keystone Dam allows the hyacinth to continue downstream, but the lock will trap and fill up considerably large mats of the plant. It can be further distributed from upstream rivers, overflowing household ponds and boats that do not clean down their props before entering another water body. One hectare of dense *E. crassipes* mat can contain more than 360 metric tons of plant biomass (Smithsonian Marine Station). The species cannot tolerate freezing weather but a scientific conclusion about whether it can tolerate brackish water conditions is still in discussion. Many land managers attempt to maintain or eradicate *E. crassipes* by chemical means. Biological controls, such as weevils, have also been introduced by university research facilities. Both means of control and eradication can be controversial for the efficacy rate, chemical effects on amphibians and dissolved oxygen levels, as well as introducing new pests to the region. Cajuns for Bayou Têche addresses *E. crassipes* by mechanical means in a regulated and effective removal process.

Triadica sebifera, or Chinese tallow tree, is an ubiquitous invasive tree species in south Louisiana. It can be found along the banks of Bayou Têche and can dominate landscapes on private and public lands. The eradication of this tree is debatable as the seed is a good fatty source of fuel for birds in the winter. However, it can, and does, displace native plant habitat. Maintenance and control of this tree can be achieved by girdling or total mechanical removal.

Dreissena polymorpha, or the freshwater zebra mussel, originated in Russian water bodies. It was accidentally transported to North America via hulls in large shipping vessels. It is primarily found in the Great Lakes Region, slowly moving south and in recent years was found at the Old Mississippi Water Control Structure. Should the *D. polymorpha* continue its geographic spread south, the Têche Vermilion Fresh Water District will be the first agency to identify and alert appropriate agencies and organizations about its arrival and abatement methods.

Another invasive species is *Hydrilla verticillata*, introduced through the aquarium trade and well established in water bodies throughout the southern states. Hydrilla forms dense mats of vegetation that destroy fish and wildlife habitat and its easy means of regeneration allows it to spread freely through small fragments. It is also highly resistance to salinity, making it even more pervasive in south Louisiana.

Beavers, nutria and Asian carp pose potential threats along the Bayou Têche if not monitored and managed closely.

PADDLE TRAIL PROPOSAL

The BTPT proposal focuses on rudimentary development; trailhead and sign maintenance; implementing education/information projects; maintaining and utilizing partnerships and stakeholders; and building and strengthening the recreational economy and tourism network.

RUDIMENTARY DEVELOPMENT

The public and steering committee members identified the need for rudimentary improvements at public access sites. Well-marked boat launches, education and information (E/I) kiosks, easily recognizable directional signage, facilities and bayou side camping provide an easily navigated paddle trail and seamless recreation experience for the user.

Access Points and Needs

Access points include information about on-site camping, public restrooms, potable water, garbage, recycling, directional highway signage, bayou directional signage, E/I and map kiosks, picnic/shelter and times the access point parks open and close. All access points have a need of native plant landscaping and interpretation. Site evaluations are modified from a thesis published at North Carolina State University. See Appendix E, Maps, for the official Bayou Teche Paddle Trail map.

Port Barre

2011/2012 Status

Bayou Têche RV Park

30°33'36.72"N

91°57'24.36"W

- Wooden, floating kayak launch
- Wooden covered kiosk
- M/W public restrooms
- RV hook-ups
- Electricity
- 2 covered pavilions
- Picnic tables
- Fenced RV park/tent camping area (reservations through town of Port Barre)
- Garbage
- Low water-line signage installed by St. Landry Parish Sheriff's Department

Needs

- Kayak launch reinforcement
- Kiosk improvement
- Directional road signage
- Directional bayou signage (Courtableau and Têche)
- Resident education about litter and debris
- Maintenance of low water-line signage
- Recycling
- River-mile sign on bridges and access points corresponding with official map



Boat launch at Leonville.
Image courtesy of Adam Doucet.

Leonville

2011/2012 Status

30°28.430'N

91°58.736'W

- Cement boat launch (implemented in 2012)

Needs

- Directional highway signage
- Bayou signage
- River-mile sign on bridges and access points corresponding with official map

Arnaudville

2011/2012 Status

30°24.048'N

91°55.907'W

- Unimproved motorboat launch on land owned by local church

Needs

- Improved boat and kayak launch
- Pavilion
- Potable water
- Public restrooms
- Bayou signage
- Directional roadway signage



Boat launch at Arnaudville.
Image courtesy of Adam Doucet.

- Education/information kiosk
- Landscape architecture assistance
- Garbage/recycling
- River-mile sign on bridges and access points corresponding with official map

Cecilia

2011/2012 Status

- None noted
 - o Possible site at bridge: 30°20.143'N/91°51.354'W
 - o Possible site behind grocery store: 30°20.041'N/91°51.141'

Needs

- Access
- Directional signage
- Bayou signage
- River-mile sign on bridges and access points corresponding with official map



Boat launch at Breaux Bridge.
Image courtesy of Adam Doucet.

Breaux Bridge

2011/2012 Status, Parc des Ponts de Pont Breaux

30°16.561'N

91°53.989'W

- Motorboat launch
- Covered pavilion
- Livery service and private tent camping
- Open space park
- Garbage

Needs

- Floating kayak launch
- E/I and map kiosk
- Safe place to store/lock kayaks
- Public restrooms
- Recycling
- River-mile sign on bridges and access points corresponding with official map

Parks

2011/2012 Status, Cecile Rousseau Poche Memorial Park

30°12.813'N

91°49.746'W

- Motorboat launch



Boat launch at Parks.
Image courtesy of Adam Doucet.

- M/W public restrooms
- Potable water
- RV hook-ups
- Electricity
- 2 pavilions and picnic tables
- Garbage

Needs

- Promotion
- E/I and map kiosks
- Directional roadway signage
- Bayou signage
- Tent camping delineation
- Recycling
- River-mile sign on bridges and access points corresponding with official map

St. Martinville

2011/2012 Status, Magnolia Park

30°08.321'N

91°49.066'W

- Motorboat launch
- M/W public restrooms
- Large, covered pavilion and picnic tables



Boat launch at St. Martinville's Magnolia Park.
Image courtesy of Adam Doucet.

- Park and playground
- Garbage

Needs

- E/I and map kiosks
- Bayou signage
- Walking path to Longfellow-Evangeline State Park
- Recycling

2011/2012 Status, Market Street boat launch

- Public restrooms in nearby museum/boardwalk during weekday hours

Needs

- E/I and map kiosk
- Secure place to store/lock kayaks

2011/2012 Area Needs

- River-mile sign on bridges and access points corresponding with official map
- Tent camping at Evangeline Longfellow-Evangeline State Historic Site



Above and below, Keystone Lock and Dam.
Images courtesy of Adam Doucet.

Keystone Lock and Dam

2011/2012 Status

30°04.157'N

91°49.454'W

- Publicly maintained portage (implemented on east bank in 2012)



Needs

- Funded lock-keeper/property manager
- Public access via roadway and lock-side from bayou
- Safety signs and reflective markers that do not compromise the historic nature of the lock and dam
- Public facilities
- Public camping
- Interpretive signage
- Historic preservation and oversight

Loreauville

2011/2012 Status

- No access point
- Self-controlled water control structure between Lake Fausse Pointe and Bayou Têche

Needs

- Signage to and from Lake Fausse Pointe at Loreauville Canal
- River-mile sign on bridges and access points corresponding with official map



Boat launch at New Iberia City Park.
Image courtesy of Adam Doucet.

New Iberia

2011/2012 Status, New Iberia City Park

30°00.268'N

91°48.676'W

- Motor boat launch
- M/W public restrooms
- Potable water
- Park with playground and walking paths
- Garbage

Needs

- E/I and map kiosk
- Secure/patrolled camping
- Night access for campers
- Showers
- Secure place to store/lock kayaks
- Recycling

2011/2012 Status, PJ Allain Waterfront Development (completed in 2012)

- Public restrooms accessible by kayak
- Public boardwalk accessible by kayak



Boat launch at Jeanerette.
Image courtesy of Adam Doucet.

2011/2012 Area Needs

- River-mile sign on bridges and access points corresponding with official map

Jeanerette

2011/2012 Status, TJ Viator Memorial Park

29°55.128'N

91°40.025'W

- Motorboat launch
- Large and small pavilions with picnic tables
- Portable restrooms
- Large park and playground/recreation area
- Garbage

Needs

- Secured/patrolled camping
- Potable water
- Highway directional signage
- Bayou signage
- Permanent restrooms
- E/I and map kiosk
- Recycling
- River-mile sign on bridges and access points corresponding with official map



Boat launch at Charenton.
Image courtesy of Adam Doucet.

Charenton

2011/2012 Status

29°53.310'N

91°31.852'W

- Motorboat launch St. Mary Parish's Cajun Coast Paddle Trail sign at launch

Needs

- Restrooms
- Improved E/I kiosk
- Directional signage to diner and casino
- Garbage/recycling

Baldwin

2011/2012 Status

29°49.966'N

91°32.590'W

- Motorboat launch and dock
- St. Mary Parish's Cajun Coast Paddle Trail sign at launch
- Portable restroom

Needs

- Bayou signage
- Directional highway signage
- Restrooms
- River-mile sign on bridges and access points corresponding with official map



Boat launch at Baldwin.
Image courtesy of Adam Doucet.

Franklin (end point prior to Calumet Cut)

2011/2012 Status, Parc Sur La Tête

- Motorboat launch
- Small public park and benches
- Garbage

Needs

- Signage explaining Calumet dangers and number to call for gate's opening
- Public restrooms
- Bayou signage
- Directional highway signage
- E/I and map kiosk
- Garbage and recycling
- River-mile sign on bridges/access points corresponding with official map

Calumet Cut (do not attempt unless experienced paddler; use precaution)

2011/2012 Status

- Motorboat launch and park located on south side of Cut, west of Bayou Têche

Needs

- Portage around north and south gates
- Bayou signage
- US Army Corps of Engineers information/contact signage
- Highway directional signage
- St. Mary Parish Levee District signage for roads to Corps gates
- Permission from SMPLD for public vehicle access to north gate
- River-mile sign at gates corresponding with official map

Jesse B. Hayes Memorial Public Boat Landing

2011/2012 Status

- Motorboat launch
- Boat docks
- E/I kiosk
- Large parking lot

Needs

- Improved E/I kiosk
- Garbage/recycling
- Public restrooms
- Potable water

Patterson (safest end point prior to Berwick Lock)

2011/2012 Status

- Parish tourism facility (Smith House)
- Public parking

Needs

- Improved kayak access
- Large bayou signage (bayou is wide and sign should be well seen)
- Directional highway signage
- Potable water
- Public restroom
- Covered pavilion and picnic table
- E/I and map kiosk
- Garbage/recycling
- River-mile sign on bridges and access points corresponding with official map

Bayou Vista

2011/2012 Status

- Private boat launch at mobile home court

Needs

- Bayou signage explaining location
- River-mile sign on bridges and access points corresponding with official map

Berwick

2011/2012 Status

- USACE lock

Needs

- Public access
- Permission from private landowner for easement at road to include public vehicle access

- Public restroom
- River-mile sign at lock corresponding with official map

Improvement and Maintenance Costs

Improvement Costs

Improvement funds will be grant-funded at this time. A long-term plan that includes a yearly parish allocation to the paddle trail should be developed.

Total = \$290,000

See Appendix A.

Maintenance Costs

Continuous maintenance will be required at the sites after improvements are made, including garbage/recycling collection, restroom maintenance, mowing and trimming, and erosion control. Maintenance funds will be grant-funded and provided by volunteer services at this time. A long-term plan that includes a yearly parish allocation to the paddle trail should be developed.

Total = \$75,900

See Appendix A.

EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

An education module is ideal for any nationally recognized paddle trail, particularly for visitors. Self-guided tours are aided by websites, iPhone applications, education kiosks, as well as kayak clinics and guided tours, and environmental education. Detailed maps and signage further inform cultural and historic significance. A consistent message about ecology, culture and history from Port Barre to Patterson will be paramount when developing and publishing any E/I materials. Native plant classes and demonstrations, history lectures and natural history workshops are planned by the TECHE Project and kayak clinics will continue to be held which will complement the paddle trail for residents who live on Bayou Têche or in the watershed.



Confluence of Bayous Fuselier and Têche, Arnaudville, May 1980.
Image courtesy of the Center for Louisiana Studies, UL Lafayette.

PARTNERSHIPS

Local, state and federal agencies and institutions as well as non-profit and civic organizations have supported many community efforts on Bayou Têche for several years. Well maintained, professional partnerships are essential to implement this plan, leverage funds, and ensure a consistent message about the ecology, culture, and history

are throughout the extent of the paddle trail and adjacent amenities. Specifically, private land easements with parish governments to provide camping, partnerships to build or install launches, maintain facilities, provide uniform signage and geographic information, plant and maintain native grasses, update E/I kiosks and promote trail accommodations will need to be developed through memorandums of understanding and cooperative agreements. A transparent process that will communicate plans and participating project partners will help ensure a professional and positive experience on the paddle trail and in the watershed.

Community Stakeholders or Potential Community Stakeholders

**includes parish government, sheriff and tourist commission*

- National Park Service
- US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Bayou Têche Refuge (USFWS)
- Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana
- Atchafalaya National Heritage Area
- Center for Louisiana Studies/Center for Cultural and Eco-Tourism, University of Louisiana at Lafayette
- Têche-Vermilion Fresh Water District
- Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
- Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism
- Longfellow-Evangeline State Park, St. Martinville
- St. Landry Parish Government*
- St. Martin Parish Government*
- Iberia Parish Government*
- St. Mary Parish Government*
- St. Mary Levee Board District
- Soil and Water Conservation Districts in each parish
- Têche Ecology, Culture and History Education Project
- Tour du Têche
- Transportation Recreation Alternatives in Louisiana
- Lafayette Paddle Club
- Sierra Club and Water Sentinels
- Louisiana Main Street Program in St. Martinville, Franklin and New Iberia
- Acadian Memorial, St. Martinville
- Bayou Têche Museum, New Iberia
- Chitimacha Museum, Baldwin
- Bayou Têche Experience, Breaux Bridge
- Pack and Paddle, Lafayette
- Bayou Têche Brewing Company, Arnaudville

The following municipalities and government officials signed on to the 2011 funding proposal and have expressed their continued commitment to the paddle trail project in their area.

- Patterson—Mayor Rodney A. Grogan
- Arnaudville—Mayor Kathy M. Richard
- St. Martinville—Mayor Thomas Nelson
- Iberia Parish —Parish President Ernest Freyou
- St. Landry Parish—Parish President Don Menard
- St. Mary Parish—Parish President Paul Naquin
- St. Martin Parish—Parish President Guy Cormier
- Loreauville—Mayor Albert A. Broussard, Jr.
- New Iberia—Mayor Hilda Curry

- Jeanerette—Mayor Arthur L. Verret
- Franklin—Mayor Raymond Harris, Jr.
- Department of Transportation and Development—Land Manager Michael C. Moss
- Baldwin—Mayor Wayne J. Breaux
- Port Barre—Mayor Gil Savoy, Jr.

ECONOMIC AND TOURISM NETWORK

Paddling is a growing outdoor recreation activity. A study on outdoor recreation found that the number of days spent canoeing, number of participants, and the number of trips taken will all increase significantly by the year 2050. Last year, the Georgia River Network published findings that rural communities benefit from outdoor recreation by attracting tourists specifically to participate in recreational activities. A similar study calculated that human-powered recreation (hiking, bicycling, and paddling) contributes \$590 billion annually in total gross output to the US economy. The West South Central Region (which includes Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas and Louisiana) paddling contributed \$889,157,000 to the economy where 74.4% percentage of study participants reported trip and/or equipment expenditures in 2005. With growth like this, small businesses and local tourism are likely to benefit from a nationally recognized paddle trail. The market will drive relevant small businesses development and adaption to the BTPT. As an example, a new kayak/canoe rental facility opened in January 2012 in Breaux Bridge and a local

brewery in Arnaudville is adapting its business plan to accommodate paddlers. Small businesses are a vital network to ensure the BTPT grows to a diverse recreational opportunity for both locals and visitors. At the same time, parish tourist commissions and city tourism offices play an essential role in delivering the BTPT message, pointing



Atakapa-Ishak Trail sign in Lafayette.

Image courtesy of Adam Doucet.

visitors to easily accessible accommodations and cultural/historic attractions. The Atchafalaya National Heritage Area (ANHA) has the ability to reach out nationally as well as support local efforts in developing, maintaining and attracting paddlers to Bayou Têche.

Amenities, accommodations and special events along Bayou Têche will need to be updated and shared regularly to assist the user in planning a paddle trip. This network is established in a variety of ways through the parish tourist commissions, city tourism directors and chambers of commerce. Cultural attractions and historic sites are mostly well established and will need to be compiled and translated onto maps specifically made for the BTPT. Priorities include updating the TECHE Project website, developing an iPhone application, and making and distributing brochures and other materials.

PADDLE TRAIL IMPLEMENTATION

The four components will be implemented concurrently. Timelines will be subject to the iterative process and will be dependent on funding opportunities and partner participation.

YEAR 1

Year 1 priorities:

1. Create and print official maps for TECHE Project website, brochures for distribution, kiosks and other promotional materials.
2. Establish formal partnerships for projects including Memorandums of Understanding.
3. Install new floating kayak launches at Arnaudville and Patterson, improve existing kayak launch at Port Barre and improve boat ramp to accommodate kayaks and canoes at Charenton.
4. Design and install educational kiosks in Port Barre, Arnaudville, Charenton and Patterson.
5. Improve TECHE Project website as an official BTPT resource.
6. Develop iPhone application for paddlers.
7. Improve roadway and bayou signage near Port Barre, Arnaudville, Charenton and Patterson.
8. Install native landscaping at three public access points/trailheads.
9. Provide private land owners education about native plants.

The goals of Year 1 improvements are to increase bayou use by improving access on public lands and providing easy-to-use maps online and more roadway signs, increase awareness about the historic and ecological value of Bayou Têche to visitors and residents with educational workshops and kiosks. Education and outreach goals will persist throughout and after planning. In Year 1 the TECHE Project and partners will help teach landowners about reducing non-point source pollution and the value of planting native flora along the bayou bank for habitat and aesthetic value.

YEAR 2

Year 2 priorities:

1. Install new floating kayak launches at Keystone Lock and Dam or near Ruth Canal and in Iberia Parish, and improve existing boat ramps to accommodate kayaks and canoes at Breaux Bridge and Parks.
2. Procure and plant native plant landscaping at public access points.
3. Develop and print E/I Materials.
4. Design and install educational kiosks in Breaux Bridge, Parks, New Iberia, and Jeanerette.

5. Promote BTPT with ANHA, LDT and tourist commissions.
6. Secure future funding for rudimentary improvements and needed infrastructure.
7. Install bayou and roadway signage near Parks, Jeanerette, Keystone Lock and Dam and New Iberia.
8. Improve necessary portages.

YEAR 3

Year 3 priorities:

1. Install educational kiosks in four locations.
2. Work with St. Martin Parish government, Lafayette Consolidated Government and TRAIL to assist on the Atakapa-Ishak Trail portion along Bayou Têche.
3. Start construction on new restroom at one location.
4. Secure funding for one rudimentary improvement development project and one E/I project.

YEAR 4

Year 4 priorities:

1. Install E/I kiosks in cooperation with TRAIL at Ruth Canal and/or St. Martinville.
2. Promote BTPT and AI Trail in cooperation with TRAIL and LCG.
3. Begin construction on new restroom at one location; improve small floating dock at Jeanerette Museum.

YEAR 5

Year 5 priorities:

1. Determine the needs for years 6-10.
2. Ensure partners are in place to implement future projects.
3. Promote BTPT and associated low-impact recreation trails and events.



"Flood of 1884, Bayou Teche," *Harper's Weekly*, March 29, 1884.
Courtesy of the Center for Louisiana Studies, UL Lafayette.

PADDLE TRAIL MANAGEMENT

GENERAL OVERSIGHT

TECHE Project will have primary oversight over the Bayou Têche Paddle Trail. Given the TECHE Project's familiarity and awareness of the potential partners, as well as its multi-parish scope, TECHE Project has an established organizational structure and volunteer base to update and promulgate the BTPT plan on a yearly basis when necessary, facilitate general communication of project implementation, communicate with and update partners about projects and potential funding, develop and update ecology, culture and history education messages with parish governments, ensure kiosks are updated by partners, provide official BTPT maps, create and maintain official BTPT website, participate in creating an iPhone application, work with partners to ensure kayak launches are maintained, work with partners to design and install bayou and roadway signage, all dependent on available resources. TECHE Project will also be responsible for developing and writing Memorandums of Understanding and Cooperative Agreements or necessary contracts for projects that include partner participation or fiscal sponsorship. CCET remains involved in an advisory capacity throughout implementation and management of the paddle trail. Both organizations may serve as fiscal agents for funding proposals and assist in project-based activities.

FISCAL OVERSIGHT

Fiscal sponsorship for non-profit, municipal and multi-parish projects may be necessary on a project-by-project basis. Fiduciary responsibility to the Bayou Têche Paddle Trail plan is voluntary; however, the steering committee and stakeholders recognize the importance of cooperation for implementation. Therefore, use of National Park Service, TECHE Project and Bayou Têche Paddle Trail names and logos are restricted to participating partners and at the discretion of both the National Park Service and TECHE Project.

USE OF NAMES AND LOGOS

Use of the National Park Service logo and the official name "Bayou Têche Paddle Trail" and logo will be limited in use to cooperating entities who participate in this plan and with partners in accordance with National Park Service guidelines and TECHE Project requirements. In an effort to manage and maintain consistency and appropriate messaging, all printed or promoted materials, including logo, website and social media outlets, for the Bayou Têche Paddle Trail must include the National Park Service and TECHE Project logos in hierarchical order and be approved by the TECHE Project prior to printing or distribution.

Use of TECHE Project name and/or logo must be approved in writing by two members of the TECHE Project Council with a minimum of 2 weeks' notice prior to printing. The request must be in writing and specify materials to be



View of Joe Daigre Canal, which provides access to Spanish Lake from Bayou Têche.

Image courtesy of Jennifer Ritter Guidry.

printed, quantities, audience and intended geographic distribution. The request must also specify the partners that will be included in the printed materials.

Use of Bayou Têche Paddle Trail name and logo must be approved in writing by the TECHE Project Council with a minimum of 2 weeks' notice prior to printing. The request must be in writing and specify materials to be printed, quantities, audience and intended geographic distribution. The request must also specify the partners that will be included in the printed materials.

Use of other participating party names and logos is at their discretion.

AUTHORITY ON BAYOU TÊCHE

According to the US Army Corps of Engineers, land ownership in most lakes, bays, sounds, and similar water bodies and in the Gulf of Mexico extends to the mean high water line.

National Park Service

This agency has no authority or land ownership on or adjacent to Bayou Têche. They are a partner with the Bayou Têche Paddle Trail and the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area. National Park Service provides technical assistance, leadership and information/education assistance for the Bayou Têche Paddle Trail.

US Army Corps of Engineers

USACE is responsible for all navigable waterways including Bayou Têche. All modification, including channeling, dredging, building docks, boat ramps or boat parking will be managed by USACE. They manage the water control structures at Calumet Cut in Ricohoc and the Berwick Lock in Berwick. Call 985-395-3639 ahead to determine if control structures are open at the Calumet Cut Gates or the Berwick Lock at 985-384-6334. Locking through Berwick into the Atchafalaya is possible 24 hours per day, however, boats cannot take out at the facility nor can transport vehicles be driven to this site. To contact the Berwick lockmaster, call 985-384-6334 or 985-384-7697.



Sign at Daspit Bridge.
Image courtesy of Jennifer Ritter Guidry.

US Fish and Wildlife Service

USFWS manages Bayou Têche Refuge in St. Mary Parish.

US Geologic Survey

USGS hosts real-time water level data for southern parts of Bayou Têche including Adeline Bridge and Calumet Cut at <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis>.

Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana

The tribe has sovereign authority to enforce tribal laws on their lands including at the boat launch and their lands adjacent to Bayou Têche. One boundary of the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana's reservation/trust lands is the Bayou Têche.

Atchafalaya National Heritage Area

ANHA is a heritage tourism program developed in partnership with the National Park Service and Louisiana Department of Tourism. Authority is limited to projects approved by LDT. ANHA has no authority on private or public land or public resources such as air and water.

Têche-Vermilion Fresh Water District

TVFWD operates under a Congressional mandate to pump water to Bayou Têche and Vermilion from the Atchafalaya River in Krotz Springs and funded by a millage tax in St. Martin, Lafayette, Iberia and Vermilion parishes. Their authority is only to pump water based on rainfall predictions and water levels. They also oversee the weir at Bayou Fusilier, Ruth Canal water control structure and the Loreauville user-operated water control structure.

Southern Pacific Railroad

The railroad company maintains safety and debris at the railway bridge trellis located south of Port Barre in St. Landry Parish.

Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development

LA DOTD maintains debris and garbage at state road bridges, approves or creates and installs directional signage on state bridges and state highways.

Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality

LA DEQ conducts water quality testing and enforcement of discharge permits and enforces US Environmental Protection Agency regulations for wastewater discharge.

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

LDWF Law Enforcement division oversees all boating permits and public activities. They enforce poaching laws and issue hunting/fishing permits or authorize locations for permit purchases.

Parish Governments

Parish government handles litter abatement along the bayou and at parish-owned bridges. Keystone Lock and Dam (St. Martin Parish) requires 24 hours notification to lock through.

St. Mary Parish Levee Board District

The levee board maintains levee roads to Calumet Cut and USACE gates in Ricohoc.

Police Juries and Water Districts

Their authority is limited to water drainage along parish roads.

Towns and Municipalities

Individual towns and municipalities oversee city and town parks and boat launches that are owned or leased to the city. Not all towns own their boat launches; some have public easements, which must be addressed prior to project implementation.

TECHE Project

The TECHE Project manages communications amongst partners and organizations working on BTPT. It is also responsible for the official BTPT website and for use of BTPT logo.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Working in cooperation with interested parties helps to leverage funds, share resources, and ultimately create a seamless recreational and cultural and environmental education experience for paddlers from Port Barre to Patterson. Funding will be pursued through various channels, including municipal allocations, donations and grant opportunities.

SAFETY AND LAWS

Through the Bayou Têche Paddle Trail, TECHE Project will make every effort to inform trail users of potential hazards on the bayou and in the riparian corridor. Signage and information at kiosks and on websites highlighting state regulations and boating laws and risks will be promulgated to the best ability of participating partners. It will be made clear that users paddle at their own risk and are requested to adopt a "pack it in, pack it out" ethic, respect private property and obey all Louisiana boating laws. *Everything that the paddle trail plan includes and all future paddle trail improvements will comply with safety standards.*

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APPENDIX A

BUDGETS

IMPROVEMENT COSTS

Year 1

Develop, print and distribute maps and brochures	\$5,000
Install 2 large floating docks @ \$9,000 each	\$18,000
Improve two boat ramps @ \$1,000 each	\$2,000
Install 2-4 new E/I kiosks @ \$4,000 each	\$8,000-16,000
Improve E/I kiosk at Port Barre	\$500
Improve TECHE Project website	\$1,000
Create and promote iPhone application for paddlers	\$10,000
Improve signage in or near four towns @ \$1,000 each	\$4,000
Install native plants at three trailheads @ \$1,000 each	\$3,000
YEAR 1 TOTAL	\$59,500

Year 2

Install two small floating docks @ \$3,000 each	\$6,000
Improve two boat ramps @ \$1,500 each	\$3,000
Develop and distribute E/I information	\$2,500
Install three E/I kiosks @ \$4,000 each	\$12,000
Promote low-impact recreation trails and events	\$1,500
Improve signage on bayou and in 4 towns	\$4,000
YEAR 2 TOTAL	\$29,000

Year 3

Install four E/I kiosks @ \$4,000 each	\$16,000
Construct one new public restroom facility	\$85,000
Implement one rudimentary improvement	\$1,000
YEAR 3 TOTAL	\$102,000

Year 4

Install one E/I kiosk	\$4,000
Promote BTPT, low-impact recreation and events	\$500
Construct one new public restroom facility	\$85,000
YEAR 4 TOTAL	\$89,500

Year 5

Promote BTPT, low-impact recreation and events	\$10,000
YEAR 5 TOTAL	\$10,000

TOTAL 5-year Improvement Costs **\$290,000**

MAINTENANCE COSTS

Year 1

2-5 kiosks	\$250
Four floating docks	\$400
Website	\$500
iPhone application	\$12,000
Signage	\$1,000
Native plants	\$1,000
YEAR 1 TOTAL	\$15,150

Year 2

Eight kiosks	\$400
Four floating docks	\$400
Four boat ramps	\$2,000
Website	\$500
iPhone application	\$12,000
Signage	\$1,000
Native plants	\$1,000
YEAR 2 TOTAL	\$17,300

Year 3

Eleven kiosks	\$550
Four floating docks	\$400
Eight boat ramps	\$2,000
Public restroom	\$1,000
Website	\$500
iPhone application	\$12,000
Signage	\$1,000
Native plants	\$1,000
YEAR 3 TOTAL	\$18,450

Year 4

Twelve kiosks	\$600
Four floating docks	\$400
Fifteen boat ramps	\$7,500
Two public restrooms	\$2,000
Website	\$500
iPhone application	\$12,000
Signage	\$1,000
Native plants	\$1,000
YEAR 4 TOTAL	\$25,000

Total 5-year Maintenance Costs **\$75,900**

TOTAL 5-year IMPROVEMENT AND MAINTENANCE COSTS **\$365,900**



APPENDIX B

PARISH-BY-PARISH ASSESSMENT, AMENITIES & OTHER INFORMATION

AMENITIES

Current amenities can be found on a map and include lodging, camping between access points, restrooms, livery services, restaurants/bars/café, grocery and supply stores, US post offices, hospital and medical services. All towns noted have a boat launch.

Amenities are within the public park or within walking distance of the access point unless otherwise noted by a * which indicates vehicle or bicycle transportation may be required. All public parks observe daytime hours and many parks restrict hours and lock entrance gates at sunset. Please check the park for the most up to date information.

Port Barre

- Public park/Bayou Têche RV Park (restricted hours)
 - o Public tent camping/RV camping with arrangements
 - o Restrooms
 - o Electricity
 - o Designated picnic area
- Lodging*
- Grocery store
- Gasoline
- US Post Office
- Bank
- Hospital and urgent care*
- Church

Leonville

- Bed and breakfast accessible by kayak
- Grocery store
- Gasoline
- US Post Office
- Church

Arnaudville

- Bed and breakfast
- Grocery store
- General store
- Gasoline
- US Post Office
- Diners
- Café
- Bank
- Church

Breaux Bridge

- Public park/Parc des Ponts de Pont Breaux (sunrise-sunset)
- Lodging
- Private tent camping, kayak rental and shuttle service
- Grocery store
- General store

- Hospital
- Art/music venues
- Bank
- Restaurants/café
- Bars* including bar south of Breaux Bridge accessible by kayak
- Public library
- Gasoline
- Church

Parks

- Public park, Cecile Rousseau Poché Memorial Park (sunrise-sunset)
 - o RV and tent camping
 - o Restrooms
 - o Electricity
 - o Designated picnic area
- Grocery store
- Gasoline
- Church

St. Martinville

Access is available at Magnolia Park and Market Street near the Evangeline Oak in town square. Amenities within walking distance can be primarily accessed from the Market Street launch.

- Public Park/Magnolia Park (restricted hours)
 - o Public restroom
 - o Electricity
 - o Potable water
 - o Designated picnic area
- Market Street boat launch
 - o Public restrooms in the near-by museum/boardwalk during weekday hours
- Lodging*
- Grocery store
- Gasoline
- General store
- Restaurants/bars/café
- Bank
- Church

New Iberia

- Public park/City Park (restricted hours)
 - o Public restroom
 - o Potable water
 - o Electricity
 - o Designated picnic area
 - o Recreation areas
- PJ Allain Waterfront Development (restricted hours)
 - o Public restrooms accessible by kayak
 - o Public boardwalk accessible by kayak
- Lodging*
- Grocery store*
- Restaurants/bars/café

- Hospital*
- Gasoline
- Public library*
- Bank
- Church

Jeanerette

- Public park/Jeanerette City Park (restricted hours)
 - o Electricity
 - o Potable water
 - o Designated picnic area
- Restaurant
- Grocery store
- Bank

Charenton

- Lodging
- Casino and restaurants
- Convenience store with food and gasoline

Baldwin

- Restaurant
- Gasoline
- US Post Office

Franklin

- Public park/Parc Sur La Têche
- Lodging*
- Grocery*
- Restaurants/diners
- Gasoline

Patterson, Smith House

- Lodging*
- Grocery*
- Restaurants/diners*
- Gasoline*

TOURISM, CULTURAL AND HISTORIC ATTRACTIONS

Named cultural and historic attractions can be found on a map and include information/tourism centers, local, state and/or federally recognized cultural or historic sites, museums, graveyards, plantation homes, Civil War sites and water control structures. The following list is not comprehensive and focuses primarily on facilities that are publicly funded or private facilities that are recognized as historically and/or culturally significant.

An **i** indicates an official tourist information center is located within walking distance of the boat launch. Cultural and historic attractions are within walking distance of the access point unless otherwise noted with *.

Port Barre

- Birthplace of Bayou Têche

Arnaudville

- Arnaudville Chamber of Commerce **i**
- Robin House (not open to public), privately owned, recognized by Atchafalaya National Heritage Area
- Stephanie House (not open to public), privately owned, recognized by Atchafalaya National

Heritage Area

- La Junction sunken boat at Bayou Fusilier (lore)
- Music shop
- Arts/music venue

Breaux Bridge

- Bayou Têche Information Center **i**
- Restaurants/cafés
- Clothing shops
- Gift shops
- Antique shops

St. Martinville

- St. Martinville Tourist Information Center **i**
- Levert-St. John Bridge, US National Register of Historic Places
- Evangeline Oak, St. Martinville Tourist Information Center
- St. Martinville Cultural Heritage Center, St. Martinville Tourist Information Center
- African-American Museum, St. Martinville Tourist Information Center
- Museum of the Acadian Memorial, St. Martinville Tourist Information Center
- Longfellow-Evangeline State Commemorative Area, Louisiana State Parks

Keystone Lock and Dam

- Keystone Lock and Dam (not open to public), St. Martin Parish Government
- Maintained kayak/canoe portage on east bank

New Iberia

- Shadows-on-the-Têche, National Park Service
- Bayou Têche Museum
- Historic District Walking Tour, City of New Iberia
- Book store
- Clothing shops
- Gift shops

Jeanerette

- Cotton House (not open to the public)
- Jeanerette Bicentennial Park and Museum, accessible by kayak/canoe

Chitimacha Reservation, near Charenton

- Chitimacha Museum, Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana

Franklin

- Battle of Irish Bend Civil War site north of City of Franklin
- Historic District listed on National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service
- Live Theatre

Patterson

- Cajun Coast Information Visitor and Convention Center **i**
- Swamp Tour
- Museum*
- Golf Course*

APPENDIX C

FESTIVALS

This is a list of annual festivals that occur within walking distance of Bayou Têche. There are several festivals that occur in each parish throughout the year. To address paddler accessibility, this list is limited to those within a walking distance of the bayou. Festivals associated with *Tour du Têche* occur along the entire length of the Têche during the corresponding race. Shake Your Trail Feather, hosted by the TECHE Project, occurs in a different town along the Bayou once per year.

ST. LANDRY PARISH

- February/March, Courir de Mardi Gras, throughout the parish
- April, Etoufée Festival, Arnaudville
- November, Cracklin Festival, Port Barre
- December, Fire and Water Festival, Arnaudville

ST. MARTIN PARISH

- February/March, Le Grand Boucherie, St. Martinville (*always the Saturday before Mardi Gras*)
- March, Acadian Memorial Festival, St. Martinville
- April, Blooming on the Bayou, Breaux Bridge
- April, Cracklin' Cook-off, Parks
- May, Breaux Bridge Crawfish Festival, Breaux Bridge
- September, Breaux Bridge Chamber of Commerce Jambalaya Cook Off, Breaux Bridge
- September, Creole Zydeco Festival, St. Martinville
- September, Pepper Festival, St. Martinville
- October, City-Wide Garage Sale, Breaux Bridge
- October, African-American Museum's Annual Okra Festival, St. Martinville
- November, Atchafalaya Basin Festival, Henderson
- December, Fire and Water Festival, Arnaudville

IBERIA PARISH

- May, Bunk Johnson Jazz Festival, New Iberia
- September, Cajun French Music Festival, New Iberia
- September, Sugar Cane Festival, New Iberia
- October, New Iberia Gumbo Cook-Off, New Iberia
- November, Great Chili Challenge, New Iberia
- November, Shadows Civil War Encampment, New Iberia

ST. MARY PARISH

- February/March, Courir de Mardi Gras, throughout the parish
- February, Eagle Expo, Morgan City/Atchafalaya Basin
- April, Cypress Sawmill Festival, Patterson
- April, Black Bear Festival & Wooden Boat Show, Franklin
- July, Bayou BBQ Bash, Morgan City
- Shrimp & Petroleum Festival, Morgan City
- October, Franklin Harvest Moon Festival, Franklin
- December, Christmas on the Cajun Coast, Morgan City, Patterson and Franklin

APPENDIX D

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

Public meetings were held in each parish and were open to the public. The notes from each meeting, in chronological order, is below.

ST. LANDRY PARISH PUBLIC MEETING PORT BARRE COMMUNITY ROOM TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2010

Head count approx. 25

Including Mayor of Port Barre, tourism directors, active paddlers, Tour du Têche planners

Assessment of Current Situation

- Maps
 - o Identify restaurants, campsites
 - o Put in/take out sites
 - o Can't get out in Leonville
 - o Difficult to paddle upstream so need to know where to park
 - o Tour du Têche website has race maps
- Identify bridges, GPS coordinates
- New set released next week (Thanksgiving week)
- Certain facilities listed—Ken Grissom will issue more comprehensive listing of services (lodging, food, etc.)
- Safety
 - o Central check-in
 - o Stretcher lines—add on signs
- St. Landry Sheriff's Office currently marking obstacles
 - o Mile markers
- Trash blockage/removal
 - o Poché Bridge area
- Pilings are so close debris collects there and bridge starts to deteriorate
- St. Martin Parish police jury responds to complaints
 - o All bridge areas
 - o Need to educate the public
 - o Also need to address feeder waterways
- Bayou Courtableau
 - o Difficult to enforce
- Sheriff's boats mostly for search and rescue
 - o St. Martin Parish does not have mandatory trash pick-up
- No way to penalize violators
- Land owners' stewardship program
 - o Don't burn trash
 - o Don't dump furniture, etc.
- Visitor comments
 - o Most thought bayou was beautiful
 - o 12 states, Belize
 - o Port Barre to Parks, approx. 40 miles, is problem area
- Bayou not very wide
- GPS coordinates of trash dumps, debris fields
 - o DEQ sent letters to those land owners, response successful
- Erosion problems
 - o Educate effective means of protection (don't use trash)
- Septic tanks
 - o No one will take responsibility for regulation
 - o Older models with failed aerators
 - o DHH issues the permits, can they be rescinded?
 - o Coulee Baton—municipality addressed issue with financial assistance
- Great improvement over last 10 years
 - o Almost safe enough to tube
- Keith Lastrapes, Palms on the Teche
 - o Considering a drop-in/pick-up business
- Ingo Werk, German by way of California
 - o Interested in establishing B&B for kayakers
 - o Meeting with Breaux Bridge representatives to discuss establishing facility on the waterway
- Landowner concerns about people bothering them
- Lack of public showers, boat lockers, necessary facilities
- Book—*Kayaking Bayou Teche*, St. Landry Parish Library
 - o In print?
 - o Needs to be updated
- Lack of markers, both mile and historical
 - o Repurpose existing markers
- Label bridges with names and GPS coordinates
- Authority to enforce?
 - o Parish governments' regulations
 - o Separate entity to enforce?
 - o 'presumed posted'—can be charged with trespassing
- Water level fluctuation creates access difficulty

Priorities

- Maps/brochures
 - o See safety items below for inclusion
- Mile markers
 - o Label bridges with names and GPS coordinates
- Trash regulation
- Access points
 - o Especially for non-motorized watercraft, i.e. floating docks
 - o Especially at bridges
- Safety
 - o Emergency contact information
 - o Portage contacts
- Locks at Keystone Dam
- Sugar barge operation
- Gulf Coast counter-currents

- Gates at Calumet Cut
- Government incentive development or extension (Atchafalaya Tax Program)
- Look at the Ouiska Chitto model

Needs

- NPS to assist with identifying how to address enforcement/stewardship
- Entrepreneurs
- Government facilitation
 - o Tax incentives
- Atchafalaya Tax Incentive program
- Acadiana Regional Development District
 - o Business restriction easement
 - o Economic incubator

Potential Community Partnerships

- Acadiana Regional Development District
- LA 31 Brewery
 - o Wood duck box program
 - o Maintenance issue
- Ducks Unlimited
 - o Quail habitat
 - o Active in Melville

Request for further input

- Acknowledgement of sponsors
- Working logo

ST. MARY PARISH PUBLIC MEETING CHITIMACHA RESERVATION RECREATION CENTER THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2010

Head count approx. 15

Including Parish President, active paddlers, Tour du Têche director, landowners

Assessment of Current Situation

- Maps
 - o Refer to Buffalo River and Florida paddle maps
- Best aesthetics along the Têche in St. Mary Parish
- Bridges can be water/emergency stops
 - o Some have identifying signs, all need to be identified
- Park launches can be further developed for better access
- Wax Lake outlet
 - o 4.3 feet is the limit of navigability
- Franklin is ready
 - o 4 boat landings
- Best areas for stops
 - o Charenton
 - o Baldwin
 - o Franklin
 - o Jeanerette
- Waterway has little to no obstruction
 - o White goods, organic debris
- Need for historic markers
- No existing shuttle service
- Sugarcane water runoff

- o Issue of ownership and culpability
- o June to September trash is the worst
- Education
 - o Trash
 - o Responsible boating
- When will we present to parish/city councils?
 - o Need to garner their support
- Reward for trash clean up
- No website
- Water lilies
 - o Charenton to Jeanerette
 - o Corps needs to open Calumet
- Water current challenges over a 12-hour period
- Silting problem—due to barge traffic
- Boats respecting one another
- Permit system for paddlers to cover insurance for private landowners

Priorities

- Designated camping areas
- Marking all boat landings from the nearest highways
- Marketing and promotion of the trail
- Shuttle services/entrepreneurial development
- Bridge signage
- Interactive website

Potential Community Partnerships

- Local Ducks Unlimited groups
- Local Chambers of Commerce
- Franklin restaurant on the water
- Other restaurants might buy into shuttle service

IBERIA PARISH PUBLIC MEETING BAYOU TÊCHE MUSEUM THURSDAY, JANUARY 20, 2011

Head count 6

Including tourism director, active paddlers, city recreation dept. representatives

Assessment of Current Situation

- Waterway management—water managed by the Corps of Engineers, land managed by the municipality
- In the past, paddle boats available—need entrepreneurs, grant monies
- Would love organized bayou tours
- Drops unmarked, dangerous
- Great Gator Race at Bouligny Plaza
- Great (viewing) access to bayou—but no docks, no outfitters
 - o Award-winning Main Street
- Need to clean the waterway
 - o City currently improving wastewater facilities
- Tax incentives should be offered
- Better community education and awareness needed
 - o Not enough locals using the waterway
- Landowners may not be happy to have people on their property
- Litter is a major problem

- o Need a litter campaign
- No access in Loreauville
- o Private access near there

Priorities/Issues

- Cleaner water
- Improved access
- Publicity/communication with the leisure paddler
- Connect visitors with tourism opportunities
- Signage
 - o Safety
 - o Visitor information
- Reconciling powered watercraft and non-motorized recreation
- Seek grants for implementation
- Mail survey for landowners
- List B&Bs near the bayou
- Create an organization like the Bayou Vermilion District

Potential Community Partnerships

- Conrad Rice Mill, Sandy Davis
- Paddling Club
- Tourism attractions/boards
 - o Iberia Parish Attractions Association
- McIlhenney, Angie Sharper
- Pelicans on the Bayou restaurant
- Jeanerette Museum
- Breaux Brothers boatbuilders and others located along the bayou
- Breaux's Baycraft, Royce Breaux
- Bayou Landing shopping center—under utilized, has restaurant, theater
- Bayou Têche Guest Cottage
- New Iberia City Park
- Acadiana Tourism Coalition

ST. MARTIN PARISH PUBLIC MEETING BREAUX BRIDGE PUBLIC LIBRARY TUESDAY, JANUARY 25, 2011

Head count approx. 21

Including Tour de Têche planners, Têche Brewing Company, paddlers, new faces/old faces

Assessment of Current Situation

- Identify the cause of low dissolve oxygen level and mitigate
- Pollution/low water quality
- Doesn't need much development—it's an established attraction
- Lots of tree debris and obstacles
 - o Renewed interest by sheriff departments in clean-up
- Blog with regular updates
- What is the function of the Keystone Lock?
- Farmer incentives needed
 - o Control runoff issues
 - o Perhaps utilize outsiders like Quails Unlimited
 - o Agriculture best practices
- Arnaudville's dock needs improvement

Priorities/Issues

- Trash Regulation
- Better coordination with sheriffs
- Better education campaign
 - o Farmers
 - o Septic tanks
 - o General population
- Need for portage service
- Better coordination with Têche-Vermilion Freshwater District
- Signage
 - o All 4 parishes have agreed to bridge signs with GPS coordinates
 - o *Tour du Têche* has maps available with coordinates
- Ken and Nicole putting together a paddle guide
- Better assistance for entrepreneurs
 - o Alleviate red tape
 - o Create a checklist to establish business along the Têche
 - o Tax incentives
- History signs were cool
 - o Local historian is conducting research for a book on the Têche, he offered to write the history content for our plan
- Landowner survey and education campaign
 - o Even mowing grass further from the bank
- Create dedicated website
 - o Link exchanges
- Better advertisement bayou-side
- Residential input and awareness

Potential Community Partnerships

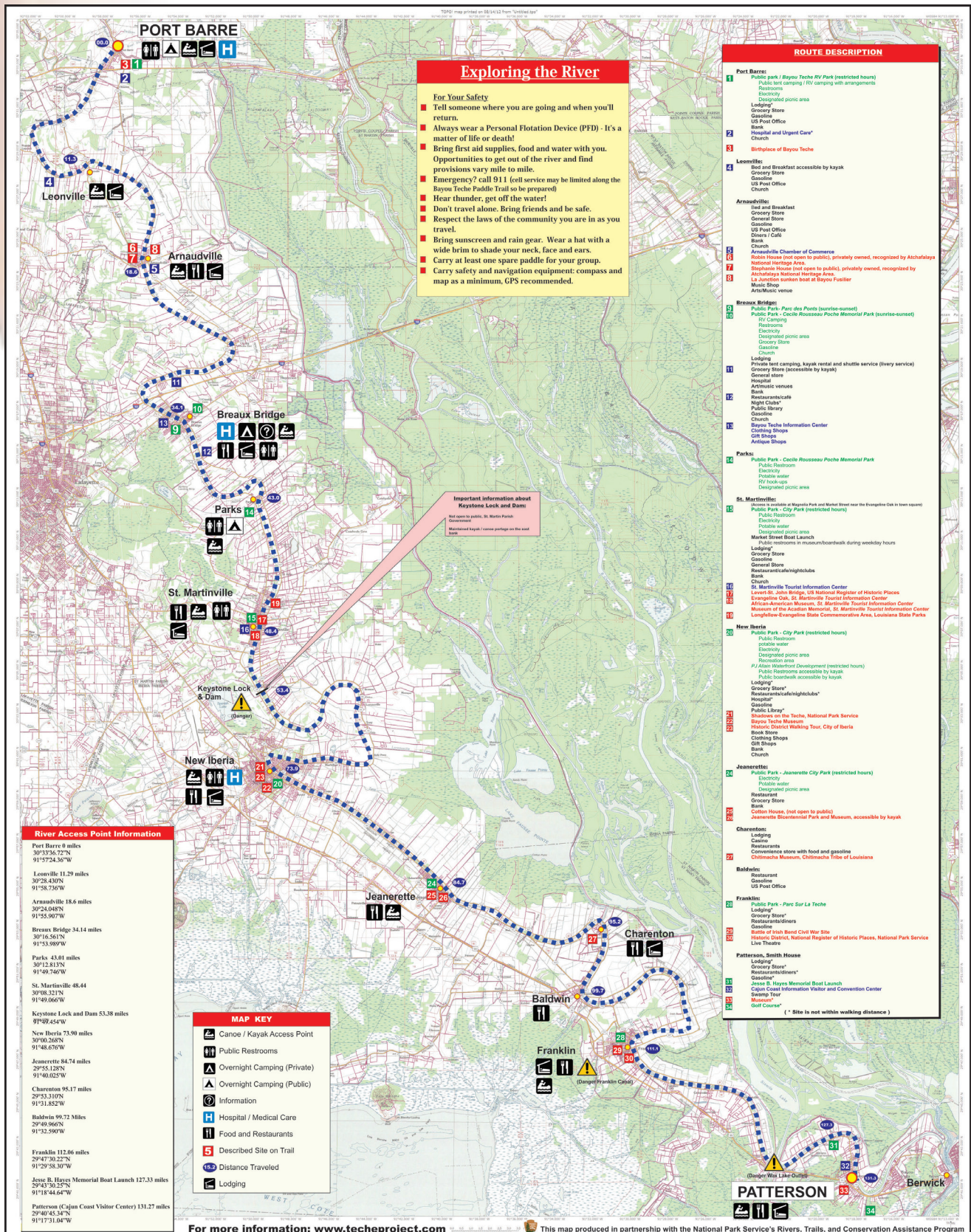
- Parish governments
- Local senators and representatives
- Tourism commissions
- Established businesses along the Têche
- Baby's Coffee
- Rocky's B&B

ADDITIONAL MEETINGS WERE HELD:

- March 24, 2011, at the Acadian Memorial in St. Martinville
- June 30, 2011, at the Iberia Parish Economic Development Foundation office in New Iberia
- May 30, 2012, at CCET office in Lafayette
- September 5, 2012, at Buck and Johnny's restaurant in Breaux Bridge

APPENDIX E

MAPS



BAYOU TECHE PADDLE TRAIL

Port Barre - Patterson, LA

NOTES

