



**Community Workshop Results of Individual Participant Issues
Thibodaux, Louisiana – February 21, 2006
Hosted by: Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program
Hosted at: Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve,
Wetlands Acadian Cultural Center**

Rationale: Participants were asked to write down two priority issues regarding the economic and/or environmental health of the Gulf of Mexico on two separate index cards. These cards were collected and categorized by the facilitators into 16 broad issues, listed numerically below. Beneath each issue, the exact responses from the index cards are listed. The 16 broad issues were posted and all 99 participants voted twice to arrive at the top five. These issues then became the focus of smaller breakout groups. Please refer to the summary of the breakouts for participant responses to that aspect of the workshop.

PRIORITY ISSUES

1. *Coastal Land Loss and Restoration (Erosion, channelization, subsidence, sediment management, habitat loss)* – 38 votes
 - a. Want further talk on sediment delivery. What sources are available (particle size); source locations; efficient means of transporting sediments
 - b. Sediments diverted offshore, concentrations in the rivers decreasing
 - c. Hydrologic modification
 - d. Inability to decide how to divert sediment from the Mississippi River into degrading coastal waters to rebuild land lost to subsidence and coastal erosion.
 - e. Loss of sediment (non-beneficial use of dredged material, off-coast deposit)
 - f. Sediment/freshwater diversion into the Terrebonne estuary. Water into Bayou Lafourche, into Bayou Terrebonne.
 - g. Prioritization of wetland habitats capable of cost-effective sustainable restoration efforts and public recognition that some areas will not be (sustainably) restored.
 - h. Cut government red tape on restoration projects. Streamline permitting process. Real and immediate fines for damages.
 - i. Utilization of river in a common sense way. Many smaller scale diversions. More sediment.
 - j. Coastal restoration
 - k. Build land now!
 - l. Elevation coping with subsidence and accelerated sea level rise

- m. Subsidence
 - n. Coastal habitat decline in health and a real extent
 - o. Wetland loss
 - p. Land loss restoration
 - q. Coastal land loss
 - r. Coastal land loss
 - s. Coastal land loss!! Specifically, loss of sediment thru channelization of River, erosion and subsidence, sea level rise, oil and gas channels, dredging, loss during storms, etc, etc, etc.
 - t. Reduction of storm surge by marshland: how much less damage would have occurred if we had the marshland that we've lost.
 - u. Habitats loss (coastal, barrier island, swamps)
 - v. Coastal habitat loss
 - w. Land loss
 - x. Land loss
 - y. Restoration
2. ***Hurricane Protection*** – 17 votes
- a. Hurricane protection
 - b. Comprehensive hurricane protection, including wetland protection, restoration and construction
 - c. Better planning for and protection of the human species (increasingly) inhabiting the shorelines and coastal areas of the U.S. and world. (GOM and LA specifically)
 - d. Hurricane protection
 - e. Flood control/Hurricane Protection. (Protect inland habitats, people, infrastructure)
 - f. Hurricane Protection
3. ***Education (formal and informal) and Outreach*** – 17 votes
- a. Education
 - b. Ignorance of coastal ecosystem values and importance
 - c. Educating the rest of the nation as to the importance of coastal wetlands maintenance
 - d. Education – educate the educators
 - e. Education – we need to push locally as well as on a state level for more information to be filtered to our schools and communities. People and students need to be reminded each day what we are doing in our parish and state to address the restoration of our coastal wetlands
 - f. Environmental literacy and public outreach efforts
 - g. Educational issue: how to convey the truth about the coastal crisis truthfully, but with hope for the future!
 - h. Environmental literacy (through informal and formal education)
 - i. Education/outreach (educating Louisiana. Louisiana educating the USA)
 - j. Formal wetland education both for educators and state school students (all levels)
 - k. Education
 - l. Education

- m. Education
- n. Resistance by locals to conservation and restoration
- 4. **Water Quality** – 11 votes
 - a. High water quality standards and enforcement of these standards throughout the State and Gulf – including nutrient loading and the hypoxic zone.
 - b. Clean water is the foundation for the quality of life. How do we better address the importance of this fact? How do we better address the issues associated with man living near the seas? (Waste water, solid waste, and pollution?)
 - c. Water pollution
 - d. Hypoxia
 - e. Pathogens, HABs, water quality
- 5. **Need for Implementation (Prioritize and take action quickly)** – 10 votes
 - a. Coordination, integration of restoration planning and implementation
- 6. **Need for Coordination (Across agencies, industry, NGOs, and across restoration and enforcement efforts)** – 9 votes
 - a. Lack of: communication, coordination, and understanding – between industry, NGOs, and agencies. I.e.: goals, objectives and commitments to the environments. Inability to find common ground for progress forward.
 - b. Disconnect (lack of coordination/enforcement) between coastal restoration efforts and coastal management efforts of regulated coastal activities.
 - c. BIG PROBLEM: The Corps of Engineers should not have a major role in any policy-making. Not appropriate. Corps should build no project without beneficial use of dredged material and mitigation for wetland impacts. They should be a technical service agency. Short-term solution: take Corps out of coastal restoration planning and NRCS also. Ultimate solution: put Corps under EPA or USFWS
 - d. Concern: emphasis on consistency between/among participants.
- 7. **Funding** – 9 votes
 - a. Want further talk on the sharing of OCS royalty revenues in the Gulf (fair share) for Gulf States as it is applied in the inland states. (Funding is a key)
 - b. Lack of funding for coastal restoration projects. (A direct result of lack of political will)
 - c. Concern – assure monies to go beyond immediate steps (36 months → 10 years)
 - d. Darin Lee needs a pay raise
- 8. **Cultural Identity and Heritage** – 9 votes
 - a. As an educator and native of Lafourche I am worried that our young people will not be able to identify as young adults “who they are.” It’s not just land loss, but cultural identity loss.
 - b. Cultural heritage
- 9. **Population Growth and Development** – 5 votes

- a. Unplanned urbanization is destroying coastal habitats and degrading water quality
 - b. Development
 - c. Best management practices – coastal communities are expanding and developing; populations are increasing, more development means more erosion, sedimentation, turbidity, etc.
10. ***Saltwater Intrusion*** – 4 votes
- a. Salt water intrusion on South LA agriculture crops, crawfish, rice, and sugar cane.
11. ***Storm Effects on Local Fisheries, Habitats*** – 4 votes
- a. Storm effects on local fisheries and habitats
12. ***Research and Data Access (habitat and species information)*** – 4 votes
- a. Habitat mapping/conservation
 - b. Understanding the ecosystems and the species that makeup each. Ex: organisms that are found in the Miss. River (fisheries) total biological profile of each species. We cannot manage what we don't understand.
 - c. Use new technologies for restoration projects
 - d. Data: not always easy to get from researchers.
13. ***Involve Stakeholders and Provide Transparency*** – 3 votes
- a. Existing, consensus-driven plans that involved all stakeholders need to be used now! We must use restoration projects that are acceptable to the public.
 - b. How do we engage the public's active participation in activities which promote the preservation and restoration of Louisiana's Coastal environment? Idea: adapt a marsh segment; bayou segment and make stewards responsible for their well-being.
 - c. Lack of transparency in the coastal restoration planning process. Talking heads develop these plans behind closed doors... then wave around a 600-page draft document for public comment.
14. ***Oil and Gas Pipeline Canals (contribution to wetland loss)*** – 1 vote
- a. Oil and gas pipeline canals and their contribution to wetlands erosion
15. ***Political Will, Turf Battles*** – 1 vote
- a. Are coastal zone residents valuable to the Federal Government as a whole?
 - b. Political turf battles. Congressional interest.
 - c. Voting / public office / officials – get people to the polls. Politicians not pushing own agendas in laws, amendments, bills, and speeches.
 - d. Lack of political will
16. ***Fisheries By-Catch*** – 0 votes
- a. Fisheries by-catch and the lack of support on the issue. Additionally a lack of enforcement of using the fish excluder devices.