

MINUTES
FALSE RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL
December 5, 2012

The False River Watershed Council met in regular session at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 5, 2012, at the Courthouse Annex in New Roads, Louisiana.

Chairman Mike Wood called the meeting to order and directed Ms. Dinah Bourgeois to call the roll:

PRESENT: Messrs. Thomas Van Biersel, Owen Bello, Jerry Hix, Paul Miller, Cy D'Aquila, Jimmy Chustz, Ron Pourciau, Jake Causey, Major Thibaut, and Mr. Mike Wood, Chairman.

ABSENT: Dr. Connie Castille, Messrs. Steve Juge, Jimmy Lyles, Kyle Olinde, and Rick Ward.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Mr. Pourciau and seconded by Mr. Miller:

RESOLVED, That the Agenda be accepted.

Unanimously carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Chairman Wood and seconded by Mr. D'Aquila:

RESOLVED, That the minutes of the regular meeting of November 7, 2012, be accepted as written and be officially published.

Unanimously carried.

UPDATE ON FISHERIES STATUS

Ms. Rachel Walley of LA Wildlife and Fisheries gave an update on the fisheries status. She presented a three-year study to the council. The study entailed sampling, age, and genetics of the False River fish. She also discussed with the council the electrofishing, harvest, and release percentages. She informed the council the term electrofishing means that the fish are stunned so they can be collected for sampling. The fish are not killed. Mr. Thibaut expressed concerns regarding completion of this project. Chairman Wood informed the council that possibly in a few months, the project will be complete. Concerns were presented to the council regarding stocking of fish. Chairman Wood stated stocking is for the introduction of Florida genetics for larger fish. Mr. Thibaut inquired about other species of fish on behalf of his constituents. Ms. Walley informed the council that there is not enough data on other species of fish. Mr. Thibaut also

expressed concerns regarding the catch of fish. Ms. Walley informed the council that the catch is difficult because of habitat issues. Chairman Wood stated the catch will improve once the habitat of the fish improves. Mr. Keith Robillard expressed concerns regarding the spawning age. He inquired about placing fish in the False River lake. Chairman Wood informed the council that stocking is a measure to address the symptom. Habitat improvement will solve any shortage of young fish.

Ms. Walley presented to the council the ear bone of a fish. This sample shows how fish are aged.

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Walley gave an update of sub-committees. She reported that members of the sub-committees agreed to the recommendations that were made for the management plan and there may be more recommendations in addition to what they presently have.

The council discussed lake level management. Mr. Hix informed the council there are no contacts yet. As of yet, there was not a set date for a Watershed Conservation Sub-Committee meeting.

CHRISTMAS TREE PROJECT

Mr. Pourciau discussed with the council the Christmas tree project. Mr. Bello informed the council that the Police Jury can collect and load trees starting the year 2013.

CONDEMNATION OF PIERS

Mr. Thibaut expressed concerns with the dilapidated piers on the lake. Mr. Bello informed the council that it may be possible to use the same method that the parish uses on property owners of condemned houses. Mr. D'Aquila stated that he will seek the rightful owners of the piers. Mr. D'Aquila will produce ordinances for erosion control, servitude of drainage and permitting. Mr. Thibaut suggested creating new boundary line for state property. Mr. D'Aquila suggested building seawalls on angles. Chairman Wood discussed with the board a management plan for permitting.

Chairman Wood informed the board the purpose of the sub-committees is to find out what will work for the project.

WATER QUALITY

The discussion meeting for water quality will be December 20, 2012. Mr. Van Biersel will continue building table of contents for compilation.

FUNDING UPDATE

Mr. Thibaut stated priorities will be presented to the Governor for funding. Restoration funding will be motion toward the False River project. There are other possible funding sources in the future. He also stated Mr. Tommy Comeaux of The Banner would like to promote the project. He suggested a fish tournament and rodeo to help raise money for the restoration fund. He also suggested other events for funding. Mr. Van Biersel informed the council that the Police Jury needs to hire a design engineer.

Motion by Mr. Thibaut and seconded by Mr. Causey:

RESOLVED, That Mr. Bello recommend to the Police Jury to hire a design engineer for the False River Project.

Unanimously carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/PERSONAL PRIVILEGE

Mr. Wood stated that Mr. J. Chustz informed the council that he will move buoys.

Mr. Justin Shaw informed the council that raw data is being collected for turbidity and water levels. He is waiting for more rainfall to collect more data which will be presented at the next meeting. The council discussed other citizens aiding in the collection of samples.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

Motion by Mr. Causey and seconded by Mr. Wood, the meeting adjourned at 6:47 p.m.

MIKE WOOD, CHAIRMAN