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## NRDA Program restores 392-acre marsh habitat for wildlife

The Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) Trustees recently embarked on a compensatory marsh creation project to restore wetland habitat near Long Point Bayou. This project will compensate the public for damages from a toxic oil spill to the Calcasieu Estuary.

The NRDA Program's goal is to make the public whole for injury to natural resources and their services. This is accomplished through assessing impacts to natural resources and their services, damaged by oil or hazardous chemicals released into the environment. Following damage assessment, NRDA Trustees negotiate compensation for injured resources and their services with the responsible party of the release. Financial settlements are used for building new wetlands or habitats with nexus to the injured resources, in addition to recreational projects such as fishing piers.



Shown above are State and Federal NRDA Trustees: Pat Williams, NOAA; Bryan Alleman and Nick LaCroix, LDNR; Dan Hahn, NOAA; Jon Weibe, LDWF; Brian Spears, USFWS; Adrienne Gossman, LDEQ, at the Long Point Bayou Marsh Creation Project site.

Sediment movement began on Aug. 14 of this year for the Long Point Bayou Marsh Creation Project. In June 2006, 54 thousand barrels, or 2,268,000 gallons, of sludge waste oil was released from CITGO Petroleum Corporation (CITGO) into the Calcasieu River and flowed into receiving waters such as Calcasieu Lake, Moss Lake, Prien Lake and the Gulf Intercoastal Waterway.

An estimated 150 miles of marsh shoreline was affected by the spill. The marshland was severely damaged which led to loss of water organisms, tidal habitat, wildlife habitat and recreational grounds. The shoreline began to erode only two weeks after the initial event. NRDA aims to restore the injured habitat and their services, either through primary or compensatory restoration.

A settlement was reached with CITGO in 2021 and the company agreed to provide \$19 million toward restoration for bird habitat, water resources and recreation. The restoration plan, which includes several compensatory projects, was completed in

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LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER



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*Slurry discharging into containment area. Sediment from slurry will settle and create land while remaining water will leave the site through a box weir.*

2022. The settlement will provide funding to create 392 acres of new saline marshland, as well as create new bird habitat, oyster reefs and recreational grounds.

How is new marsh created? Sediment is dredged and moved from the Calcasieu Ship Channel to the new marsh area. The sediment will be filled to an elevation of three feet above sea level. Five-foot containment dikes will be constructed to hold the sediment in place. Three years after the initial sediment has been placed, eight acres of tidal creeks will be created and vegetation will be planted to help restore vegetative communities. The dikes will be degraded to reestablish tidal exchange within the marsh.

There are other restoration projects that will be created using the CITGO settlement funding. The Calcasieu Lake Oyster Clutch Plant Project will restore for affected water column organisms by creating 18 acres of oyster reef in lower Calcasieu Lake. The Terrebonne Houma Navigation Canal (HNC) Island Restoration will address affected bird habitat and will create bird nesting habitat on an existing eroded coastal island that is expected to erode without augmentation by using sediment and moved next to and onto the island. Recreational use projects will be identified and built at a future date.



*A Google Earth view of the Long Point Bayou Restoration area.*

The hope is that the newly created marshland will thrive with new wildlife, new vegetation and even recreational usage. This restoration project would not have been possible without: the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ), the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (LDNR), the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF), the Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinator's Office (LOSCO), the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).



## Message from the Secretary

*Roger W. Gingles*

As A.D. Posey said, “there is magic in the old and magic in the new, the trick is to successfully combine the two.” We have a way of striking that balance at LDEQ. It’s called Brownfields.

Brownfield sites are vacant and underutilized properties where actual or suspected environmental issues are a barrier to redevelopment. Under the Office of Environmental Assessment, Remediation Division, LDEQ’s Brownfields Program partners Federal, State and local resources to facilitate the reuse of Brownfield sites throughout the State. The funding helps local entities convert the old properties to new uses by addressing regulatory and financial barriers that would otherwise keep an old gas station or dairy or bottling plant from being resurrected as a valued part of the community such as an art center or theater or training facility.



*Secretary Roger Gingles*

On Sept. 27, I had the pleasure of attending a ceremony to mark EPA’s awarding New Orleans of more than \$2 million in Brownfields funds. Representatives from EPA, LDEQ and the City of New Orleans were at the event. Two million dollars of the funds will go for cleanup of impaired properties. An additional half million will go to fund jobs training. That split highlights the flexibility of Brownfields funding. It is one of the most popular programs at LDEQ.

I am extremely proud of our Brownfields Program. I’m happy to see this money go to New Orleans. In October, more grants will go to north Louisiana cities and towns. Then late in the month, there will be a statewide meeting for Brownfields participants, the Louisiana Brownfields Conference. That will be in Alexandria, and I plan to be there.

It has been a mild storm season in the Gulf region so far. Just one hurricane that went through Florida. It’s late in the year, but I remind you that 2020 featured an October hurricane, Zeta, late in the month. Keep your guard up for a while longer.

We could use some rain (but not the wind from a hurricane). We still have drought conditions and the burn ban remains in effect. There is a salt water wedge causing problems in the Mississippi River south of New Orleans because the river’s flow is so low. Most upriver locations are all right. Many places, like Baton Rouge, use wells as the source of their drinking water. They are not likely to be impacted by the saltwater wedge, but it’s always a good idea to conserve fresh water. Too much watering of grass and other heavy water usage can lower pressure in hydrants and make it harder to fight fires.

It’s still hot. Highs in the 90s mostly. So take care when you are out in the field working. Take breaks. Cool off in air conditioning occasionally. Hydrate. Watch out for your coworkers. Know the signs of heat stroke and heat exhaustion and know what to do if you have them or your coworker has them. Stay safe.



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## Career Opportunities are available at LDEQ

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) is a state environmental regulatory agency whose mission is to protect human health and the environment. LDEQ employs highly trained personnel who are dedicated to preserving and protecting our environment. There are many professional positions now open at LDEQ, such as environmental scientists, engineers, chemists and geologists. Click here to view job specifications for these positions on the Louisiana Civil Service website. There are many benefits to working at LDEQ, including paid holidays, annual and sick leave, retirement, health insurance, life insurance and more.

**APPLY NOW AT [WWW.GOVERNMENTJOBS.COM/CAREERS/LOUISIANA](http://WWW.GOVERNMENTJOBS.COM/CAREERS/LOUISIANA)**

You can apply online by selecting the job title you are interested. Click on the “Apply” link within the posting. You will be directed to LA Careers, the Louisiana Civil Service website. If this is the first time you are applying with the online job application, you may find the Online Employment Application Guide helpful. Additional information is available to job seekers on the Civil Service website at [www.civilservice.louisiana.gov](http://www.civilservice.louisiana.gov).

For more information, contact LDEQ Human Resources Section at (225) 219-3850 or [deqpersonnel@la.gov](mailto:deqpersonnel@la.gov).

## Latest LDEQ Podcast discusses Louisiana Envirothon

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) Communications Section has ventured into a project, starting an official LDEQ podcast. Each month, the podcast, “LDEQ On Air,” features one guest answering questions about his or her role at LDEQ. The goal of the podcast is to inform the public about how issues are handled at LDEQ, how LDEQ is organized, the people behind the processes at LDEQ and answers to questions about agency issues.

The seventh episode features LDEQ Business Analytics Specialist Tomeka Prioleau as she answers frequently asked questions about Louisiana Envirothon.

Next month will feature LDEQ Environmental Scientist India Ambeau as she discusses Louisiana’s Nonpoint Source Pollution Program and gives information on how to become involved in LDEQ community outreach events.

A new podcast will be released every third Thursday of the month. An easy way to remember that is that it’s the day after the “Ask the Governor” radio show. LDEQ Communications won’t be accepting live questions but will accept email submissions with suggestions. If there are any LDEQ functions or areas that interest you, please let us know.

To listen, visit the LDEQ webpage at [www.deq.louisiana.gov/podcast](http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/podcast). LDEQ On Air is also available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify and Google Podcasts.

If you have any questions or would like to submit question suggestions, please email the LDEQ Communications Section at [SECTCOMMUNICATIONS@la.gov](mailto:SECTCOMMUNICATIONS@la.gov).





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## Louisiana Envirothon 2024 registration opens

Attention Louisiana teachers and students! LDEQ invites you to participate in the 2024 Louisiana Envirothon! This year's competition will be held March 6, 2024, at the LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens. The Louisiana Envirothon is an environmental problem-solving competition for students in grades 6-12. Teams train and compete by demonstrating their knowledge of environmental science and natural resource management with the hope of going on to represent Louisiana at the North American Envirothon Competition in New York State next summer. The competition focuses on five natural resource areas: soils and land use, aquatic resources, forestry, wildlife and a current environmental issue. The current environmental issue for 2024 is Renewable Energy for a Sustainable Future.

You can get involved by organizing a team of five students from the same school or that are associated with an organized group (i.e. FFA, 4-H, science clubs). Test preparation is on your own. However, Louisiana Envirothon will hold training sessions where team members and advisors can meet with station masters. Teams will listen to presentations and participate in hands-on demonstrations in the six subject areas as well as practice for the oral presentation. There are also study guides available online. To supplement the study guides, you may also view training videos on the Louisiana Envirothon YouTube page and Facebook page.



Students taking one of the Envirothon tests

Get Involved!

**LEAD:** You can get involved with Louisiana Envirothon by organizing a team of five students from the same school or associated with an organized group. The team registration fee is \$50. The deadline to register is Oct. 31.

**ADVOCATE:** Help us spread the word! Please share this information with any teachers or groups you think may be interested. Follow us on Facebook and share the opportunity via social media.

**SPONSOR:** Become a Sponsor! Envirothon would not be possible without our wonderful sponsors. Sponsors receive recognition on competition posters, promotional items, the LDEQ website, social media and through press releases. Details are listed on the sponsorship flyer found at [www.deq.louisiana.gov/envirothon](http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/envirothon).

Louisiana Envirothon prides itself in providing students the opportunity to engage in a unique environmental learning experience that will create more environmentally aware citizens for our state. We hope you will consider leading a team or sharing this with someone who will!

Please visit <https://docs.google.com/forms/envirothon> to register your team now!



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## Keep Louisiana Beautiful 2023 State Conference is in October

Keep Louisiana Beautiful's State Conference is an annual educational training and networking forum welcoming all individuals, Keep America Beautiful Affiliates, universities, state and local governmental agencies, community and business partners and non-profit organizations. Attendees can look forward to learning about proven practices and innovative programs designed to achieve a cleaner, greener and more resilient Louisiana.

Several of the presentations will address Greener Grounds: a Guidebook to Litter Prevention and waste Management at Outdoor Events; Protecting Our Water From Litter; and results of the Litter Study. Lt. Gov. Billy Nungesser will be the Keynote Speaker to open the conference. Special guest will be Jennifer Lawson, president and CEO of Keep America Beautiful who will also be the Keynote Speaker for the EveryDay Hero Award Luncheon Wednesday.



Please join the conference and learn more about how to Let Louisiana Shine! See you there!

To register to go to the conference Oct. 10 and 11 at the Baton Rouge Hilton Capital Center go to [www.cognitofirms.com/KeepLouisianaBeautiful1/\\_2023KLBStateConferenceRegistration](http://www.cognitofirms.com/KeepLouisianaBeautiful1/_2023KLBStateConferenceRegistration).

## First Resilience Summit to be held in December

Louisiana Clean Fuels, in partnership with the Governor's Office, invites the public to the first ever Resilience Summit, Building a Resilient and Clean Transportation System at The Estuary Water Campus on Dec. 5, 2023. There will be presentations and discussions on the policies, technologies and practices that will help transportation systems administrators to better withstand risks and quickly rebound from disasters and transition to a low-carbon future. Participants will learn about the State's newly-established Chief Resilience Officer and how it's a high-level policy position dedicated to advancing a cross-agency, holistic approach to the challenges and opportunities associated with the impacts of environmental hazards in Louisiana's coastal area.

The summit will be held at  
The Estuary, 110 River Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70802  
Dec. 5, 2023  
Registration 8:30 a.m.  
Program Begins: 9 a.m.

This event is free to attend, but registration is required. To register for the Summit, please visit <https://louisianacleanfuels.org/meet-reg1.php?id=137>.



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## Commuter Krewe informs about Interstate 10 construction

Commuter Krewe of Louisiana discussed the Interstate 10 widening project with different local companies and departments at a September 13. Guest speakers James Taylor of Franklin Associates and Sherri Lebas of GEC Inc. explained the timeline of the project and how the construction may affect commuters as they travel to work every day. The anticipated benefits of the project include reduction of traffic congestion by 20%, reduction of travel time by 2% to 18% and a 10% reduction of crashes.

The project is tentatively scheduled to begin October or November 2023.

The current plan and anticipated schedule of construction:

**2023-2024: Stage 1 – Permanent construction of WB City Park Lake Bridge and EB Service Road; temporary widening of Westbound, Acadian to I-110**

**2023-2024: Stage 1 (flyover) – Widen Westbound Flyover Curve towards Mississippi River Bridge**

**2025: Demo and Rebuild Eastbound Bridges (12-14 month duration)**

**2026: Stage 3 – Lane shifts, Restoration to 3 Lanes Each Direction**

**2026-2027: Stage 4: Demo and Rebuild Westbound Bridges (open 4 lanes each direction on I-10 at end of Stage 4)**

**2028: Stage 5 – Finalize New Infrastructure**

If you'd like more information, please visit [i10BR.com](http://i10BR.com).

Commuter Krewe encourages ride sharing for employees who usually commute on I-10 to get to work. Commuter Krewe provides a service for employees and employers. By joining Commuter Krewe, you can take advantage of carpooling, vanpooling, biking, walking, using transit and even teleworking.

These services promote clean commutes and can help contribute to better air quality, savings in gas and wear and tear on your vehicle. Using alternative transportation plays a part in contributing to reducing traffic congestion.

Commuter Krewe helps you find carpools, offers emergency rides home, has a dedicated outreach staff and has a website and resources available to you and to your business. Commuter Krewe is offering incentives for using the services. Using Commuter Krewe will help you lower the cost, time and stress of your commute, and reduce traffic congestion and air pollution.

Give Commuter Krewe a try. To find more about the programs offered, to look for a carpool or to set up one for your employees, call 225-344-RIDE or visit [www.commuterkrewe.la](http://www.commuterkrewe.la). Commuter Krewe is a service of the Capital Region Planning Commission, the Acadiana Planning Commission and the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development.



## LDEQ On The Move

### LDEQ displays Enviroscape model at SLU Stem Fest



On Aug.26, LDEQ environmental scientist India Ambeau took the Enviroscape model to STEM Fest at Southeastern Louisiana University (SLU) to educate Pre-K, elementary school, middle school and high school kids about different types of water pollution and the way it spreads through runoff.

SLU's STEM Fest is an event dedicated to connecting with Louisiana students through hands-on learning opportunities. The event is a celebration of science, technology, engineering and mathematics in the Louisiana community. There was a total of 2,100 students who attended STEM Fest, so Ambeau stayed busy informing the kids about water pollution.

### LDEQ softball team wins championship

On Sept. 26, the LDEQ softball team won the state championship. Louisiana state agencies battle every year to be the top team. LDEQ had an undefeated season, 11-0, and beat Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) in the championship game with the final score of 16-10. This is LDEQ's 3rd championship. Congrats!







## Who's Who At LDEQ?



### Jacob Newgard -- Environmental Scientist III, Office of Environmental Assessment

Newgard, a native of Walker and resident of Livingston, graduated from Louisiana State University with a Bachelor of Science in Geography. He started at LDEQ in 2017 in the Inspection and Maintenance and Stage 2 program and moved to Air Field Services in 2020. He started working with the Mobile Air Monitoring Lab (MAML) group in March of this year.

When he's not working, Newgard likes to spend time with his family, work out and work in his yard and garden.

### Katarzyna "Kasia" Dick – Geologist III, Office of Environmental Assessment

Dick, a native of Poland and former resident of Chicago and St. Louis, moved to Louisiana in May 2022 after meeting her husband. She graduated from the University of Illinois – Urbana-Champaign with a Bachelor of Science in Geology. Dick was hired on at AECOM (Architecture, Engineering, Construction, Operations and Management) right after college and worked there seven years. She was part of the remediation department and worked on various active remediation projects throughout Missouri and Illinois.

In her free time, Dick enjoys hiking state park trails, playing computer games, playing with her two dogs (a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel and a black Labrador retriever/Great Dane mix) and her daughter, Maddie.





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## Louisiana Department Of Environmental Quality's Second Quarter Summaries

### Second Quarter 2023 Enforcement Actions:

<http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/enforcement-actions>

### Second Quarter 2023 Settlement Agreements:

<http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/enforcement-division>

### Second Quarter 2023 Air Permits:

<http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/permits-issued-by-calendar-quarter>

### Second Quarter 2023 Water Permits:

<http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/lpdes>

### Second Quarter 2023 Solid and Hazardous Waste Permits:

<http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/waste-permits>

