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TOLEDO BEND ALERT

February 2019

Toledo Bend Citizens' Advisory Committee

To Educate and Activate

www.tbccac.net

tbccac3@gmail.com

Next TBCAC SOCIAL 7:00 - 8:30PM Tuesday, March 12, 2019

Our Next TBCAC Quarterly Membership Meeting and Dinner will be held on Tuesday, March 12, 2019 at the **Sabine Council on Aging – Toledo Town Location (SCOA)** located on Hwy. 191, 3/4 miles north of the Hwy. 6 Toledo Town intersection. The SCOA is located next to the DAV. Socials are held quarterly on the 2nd Tuesday of the designated month.

There will not be a guest speaker for the March meeting/social. The March meeting is devoted to organization business including election of board members, a review of the previous year's accomplishments, and a presentation of the TBCAC objectives for the up-coming year. The terms of Jim Mifflin, Mitzie Galligan and Dan Battarbee are expiring in March 2019. All three of those current board members have indicated they are interested in running for new terms. However, it is important to try to bring new members onto the TBCAC board and we encourage anyone who would like to serve to please come forward. Any TBCAC member in good standing for at least one year is eligible to run for a position on the Board of Directors. Please let president Jim Mifflin know if you are interested at 318-586-7897. The March social entrée will be bacon wrapped pork filets. Please bring complimentary side dishes and desserts and join us for good food, fellowship and updates on TBCAC. For more information, contact Jim Mifflin at (318) 586-7897.

2019 Calendar of Meetings: Be sure to “*save the date*” for the upcoming 2019 Socials:

March 12

June 11

September 10

November 12

Meetings/Socials begin at 7:00 p.m. We hope to see you there, and bring a guest!

Board Meetings: The Board meets on the 2nd Thursday of even numbered months at 2:00 pm at the SCOA-Toledo Town location. The Board welcomes all members to attend these meetings. Please contact TBCAC president Jim Mifflin if you are interested in attending that board meeting and he will provide directions to the meeting location. The detailed minutes of all Board of Directors meetings are posted on the TBCAC website at www.tbccac.net.

Lake Level as of 2/1/2019: The lake level for Toledo Bend is reported to be 172.1 feet above mean sea level, as measured near the dam by the National Weather Service automated gauge. Last year at this time the lake level was reported at 167.92 feet. Up-to-date reservoir elevations and releases may be obtained from the Toledo Bend Project offices on a 24 hour per day basis at (337) 286-5253 and (409) 565-2273. For the most current lake levels, go to www.srala-toledo.com and click on the National Weather Service link.

Sabine River Authority (SRA/LA) Updates:

Update on Spillway Repair Plans

The spillway repairs were progressing well until the heavy rains of late November and all of December 2018 caused the lake level to rise well above normal lake levels for December and January. The lake rose over the 172.5 mean sea level (msl) on December 18, 2018. At that level, the SRA Operating Guide requires some spillway gates to be opened. The contractor working on repairs had to cease repairs and remove all their equipment below the spillway. At that point, the repairs were about 18% complete. The spillway gates have been open to some degree ever since December 19 and the lake reached a peak level of 173.48 msl on 1/5/2019. The lake level as of this publication is 172.1 feet msl.

It is not possible to pinpoint exactly when repair efforts will resume. The current plan is to wait until the Spring rainy season is over. The earliest estimated resumption would be sometime in April but it is more likely that it will be June or July depending on the amount of rainfall in the Sabine River basin and the resulting lake level.

We will provide more information as time progresses.

Update on Water Sales

No specific proposed water sale is currently planned.

In the October 2018 issue of the TBCAC newsletter, we reported on the on-going work of the Louisiana Water Resources Commission.

On December 6, 2017, the Water Resources Commission passed a resolution stating that, in part, “prior to entertaining any potential offers to divert surface water to outside entities beyond its borders, the State of Louisiana must first have a good understanding of its own needs for population growth, economic development, environmental conservation, wildlife protection, and a sustainable coast, in accordance with the mandates of the state Constitution.” The resolution further states that the commission chairman “constitute a work group of members to study existing state laws governing the sales of surface water to out-of-state entities and make recommendations for improvements and/or additional processes for such sales that will guarantee that the State of Louisiana not only protects its own needs but also receives a fair market value for its water resources, such study to be reported back to the Water Resources Commission for final approval before being forwarded to the legislature.”

The specific focus of this working group is now Toledo Bend Reservoir. Act 784 of Louisiana law provides that, in addition to the Governor’s approval, the following approvals are also required for out-of-state water sales from Toledo Bend Reservoir: (1) The written concurrence of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment and (2) At least two-thirds of the governing authorities of the parishes within the territorial jurisdiction of the Sabine River Authority of Louisiana. In 2018, Senator Gerald Long proposed an amendment to Act 784 that, in addition to the other approvals, would require the approval of the Louisiana Water Resources Commission. That amendment was approved by the legislature.

The working group filed a report at the November 29, 2018 meeting of the Water Resources Commission. Following are some highlights from that report:

Minimum Water Level and Downstream Releases Requirements

- Ensuring any proposed sale would not impact releases from the reservoir to meet the downstream obligations of both the Sabine River Authorities of Louisiana and Texas as they relate to ensuring environmental, ecological, navigational or societal benefits.

- Any proposed sale agreement should clearly state that the SRA/LA (alone or in conjunction with SRA/TX) have the authority to limit, condition or even cease water withdrawals when water levels in the reservoir are in danger of going below a level that would cause significant environmental impacts or perhaps when significant impacts to other users is threatened.
- Any sales agreement should consider and mitigate potential impacts to recreational use of the reservoir. SRA/LA should attempt to document potential negative impacts, if any, to recreational uses and those businesses associated with recreational uses from the proposed withdrawals.

Benefits of Potential Water Sales

- A large water sale could replace the power sales revenue for SRA/LA. The goal would be to:
 1. Attract a large water sale to be shared by both the Louisiana and Texas SRA's.
 2. Still maintain a water reserve for future use.
 3. Not compromise the other recreational and economic attributes of the Toledo Bend Reservoir.
- Failure to find a new funding source could lead to decreased resources for SRA/LA and potentially lead to decreased maintenance of the reservoir.
- Both Louisiana and Texas each have 1 million acre feet available for annual water sales. Louisiana's failure to agree to some future amount of water sales from their allocation would not necessarily prevent SRA/TX from entering into an agreement on its own at some date in the future.

This report has some provisions encouraged by TBCAC and other citizens groups. It will be important to closely monitor future developments within the Louisiana Water Resources Commission. We will continue to encourage all regulatory agencies to involve stakeholders of the Toledo Bend communities early in the process as any proposals for water sales are being discussed.

We will continue to inform our members as we become aware of further developments.

Proposed Road Tax Increase

The proposed road tax increases for Parish Wards 2 and 3 on the December 8, 2018 ballot were as follows:

- To increase road taxes in Ward 2 by 15 mills from 10.02 mills to 25.02 mills for a 10-year period.
- To increase road taxes in Ward 3 by 10 mills from 10.25 mills to 20.25 mills for a 10-year period

There were also proposals on the ballot to increase property tax millages for school and fire district funding. All of the provisions on the December ballot were soundly defeated. The voters have spoken.

However, the very poor condition of our parish roads remains as a very significant issue. Without additional funding, the road maintenance crews are fighting a losing battle.

A reassessment of all properties subject to property tax is currently underway and expected to be completed sometime in 2019. Until that is completed, we won't know the amount of additional funding provided for road maintenance.

We will update our members as we have details on the impact of the reassessment.

NEWS RELEASE FROM SABINE PARISH TOURIST COMMISSION

For additional information, contact:

Linda Curtis-Sparks, Executive Director
Sabine Parish Tourist Commission

(800) 358-7802

Celebration Set to Kick-off the Bicentennial of Louisiana's No Man's Land

MANY, LA (Jan. 8, 2019) — In partnership with Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser, the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, Cane River National Heritage Area and the Friends of Fort Jesup, the No Man's Land Bicentennial Committee announces the kick-off of the Bicentennial Celebration of Louisiana's No Man's Land. Set for Friday, February 15th and Saturday, February 16th at Fort Jesup State Historic Site, the event will include living history demonstrations, cast-iron cooking, music, and children's activities that uncover the legends and celebrate the culture of Louisiana's Final Frontier.

The Neutral Strip region, (a.k.a. No Man's Land) draws its name from the area's brief stint as an official buffer zone between Spain and the United States following the Louisiana Purchase. When the United States purchased the territory from France; Spain and the U.S. were in conflict over the boundary south of Natchitoches. The region's use as an official buffer between Louisiana and Spanish Texas lasted roughly from 1806 until the 1819 Adams-Onis Treaty that established the Sabine River as the territory's western boundary.

Sometimes described as a place filled with an outlaw culture or as a region with a reputation for a tough and isolated place, the region is better understood as a stronghold for those cultural groups who wished to find a home where they could preserve a way of life they cherished in Louisiana's No Man's Land. Today, No Man's Land is the place where the pirate met the cowboy, and where Native Americans, French, Spanish, Africans, Creoles, Cajuns, and American pioneers from the South and West met to build communities and a culture like no other.

The No Man's Land - Becoming Louisiana Bicentennial Celebration is a collaborative effort between the seven parishes who are historically tied to the geographic area of Louisiana's Final Frontier. Partner members include Desoto Parish Tourist Bureau, Sabine Parish Tourist Commission, Natchitoches Parish Tourist Commission, Vernon Parish Tourism, Beauregard Tourist Commission, Allen Parish Tourist Commission, Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana CVB and Cane River National Heritage Area.

The kick-off celebration begins on Friday, February 15th with an official opening ceremony at 10AM featuring remarks from Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser. The Louisiana State Fiddle Champion, Clancey Stewart will perform and an authentic No Man's Land lunch will be served after the ceremony. Living historians and reenactors will be on hand to demonstrate life on the Louisiana frontier. Local schools and homeschool groups are invited to participate on this day, to reserve your group spot please contact Cane River National Heritage Area at 318-356-5555.

The celebration continues on Saturday, February 16th from 9AM to 4PM with living history demonstrations, music and children's activities. Both event days are free and open to the public. Fort Jesup SHS is located just off Highway 6 near Many, LA at 32 Geoghagan Road. For more information, please contact Sabine Parish Tourist Commission at 1-800-358-7802.

Beginning in the Fall of 2018 and continuing into the Fall of 2021, the No Man's Land Bicentennial Committee will jointly promote the culture, history, art, folklife, natural resources, cuisine, attractions and events of No Man's Land. To learn more about No Man's Land visit our website at www.VisitNoMansLand.com.

TBCAC Adopt-A-Road Program – Trash Pick-Up

The Toledo Bend Citizens' Advisory Committee (TBCAC) will be holding its next Adopt-A-Road trash pick-up on Saturday, February 16. The area assigned to the TBCAC includes both sides of Hwy 191 South, from El Camino Rd. to Cypress Bend Dr. The area of trash pick-up is about 1.47 miles.

El Camino Rd. is about 1.4 miles south of the intersection of Hwy 6 and Hwy 191.

All members (and any of your friends or family) that would like to participate in the TBCAC trash pick-up should meet at the corner of El Camino Rd. and Hwy 191 Saturday, February 16 at 9:00AM. There is plenty of room for parking. If we get a good turnout, the job usually takes only about 1 1/2 hours.

Harry Stafford will provide a few pick-up sticks (aka Grabbers) and trash bags. Water will be provided. The bagged trash will be collected from the roadside and taken to the dump. Gloves, long pants and boots are recommended.

Come out and support TBCAC by helping to Keep Sabine Clean!!

TBCAC Accomplishments – 2018

- Researched and reported on the on-going work of the Louisiana Water Resources Commission. That commission is studying the current approval process for out-of-state water sales from the Toledo Bend Reservoir. One of their objectives is to develop recommendations for possible changes to that approval process. TBCAC members have been and will continue to be apprised of the progress of the commission through articles in the TBCAC bi-monthly newsletters and broadcast emails.
- A TBCAC Board of Directors member attended every monthly meeting of the Sabine River Authority of Louisiana's Board of Commissioners meeting. Reports of the SRA/LA proceedings have been published in the TBCAC newsletters.
- Developed a Power Point presentation to assist the Sabine Parish Police Jury to inform Sabine Parish citizens of the reasoning behind the resolution requesting an increase in road taxes in Wards 2 and 3.
- Continued participation in the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development's Adopt- A – Road Program. TBCAC does quarterly trash pick-ups on a 1.4 mile section of Highway 191 south of Toledo Town.
- Participated on the "Sabine Leaders Against Litter" program. TBCAC also participated in the parish-wide litter pick-up campaigns on March 24, 2018 and September 22, 2018.
- TBCAC president serves on the SRA-LA Public Relations Committee, which meets quarterly.
- Published six bi-monthly "Toledo Bend Alert" newsletters.
- Held six TBCAC Board of Directors meetings to transact the organization's business.
- Held four TBCAC membership meetings/socials:
 - March – There is not a speaker in March due to the membership meeting to elect the Board of Directors and transact other organizational business.
 - June speaker – Mike McCormic, Sabine Parish Police Juror for Ward 3 discussed the condition of parish roads and options for additional funding to improve them.
 - September speaker – Warren Founds, Executive Director of the Sabine River Authority of Louisiana (SRA/LA) provided an update on SRA/LA activities including progress on the spillway repairs and how those repairs might impact lake levels.
 - November speaker – Mike McCormic, Sabine Parish Police Juror for Ward 3 presented the reasoning for a resolution on the December 8, 2018 ballot to increase road taxes in Wards 2 and 3 for the improvement of parish roads.

TBCAC 2019 Membership Renewals

We thank you for your loyal support of the Toledo Bend Citizens' Advisory Committee (TBCAC). Your support enables us to continually monitor proposed legislative proceedings or planned governmental actions that could affect the communities surrounding Toledo Bend Reservoir. The article in this newsletter regarding the workings of the Louisiana Water Resources Commission is an example of how TBCAC researches issues relating to the preservation of Toledo Bend Reservoir. The TBCAC will support public agencies when they act in the best interests of our communities and vigorously oppose them when they do not.

It is very important that we maintain a large membership since there is always strength in numbers. Please let us know if you have any suggestions regarding how we may better serve you.

Your 2019 membership renewal notice along with a recent reminder has been sent. If you are not sure if you have paid your 2019 dues, please contact our treasurer Mitzie Galligan at (318) 590-0975. A renewal application is also attached to this newsletter. We sincerely hope we can depend on your continued support.

We wish all members a safe and prosperous 2019.

Many Community Center Upcoming Events – Movies in Many (free admission, cokes and popcorn \$1.00 each)

February 2 – Annie, The Musical

February 16 – Beauty and the Beast

Music in Many (ticket prices vary)

February 9 – “Elvis Loves You” Annual Elvis Valentine’s Tribute – 7PM. Admission: Adults \$7, Kids \$5, Veterans Free

February 23 – Michael Wagley – 7PM. Admission: Adults \$7, Kids \$5, Veterans Free

Other Local Entertainment and Events

February 23 - Live Music at Gilligan’s Crawfish and Grill, 44 Spring St., Many, LA – Ethan Wayne. Admission: Small cover charge for the band.

Remember: You can help us save money by providing your e-mail address as a means of receiving your copy of the newsletter. You can list your e-mail address with your dues, or drop us a line at tbcac3@gmail.com. Every newsletter that we can send out via e-mail helps to save \$\$.

Help Us Grow Our TBCAC Membership: If you know someone who is not a member, give them a membership form and ask them to join. The TBCAC is a Civic & Educational Organization, dedicated to making the lake and surrounding community a true “Sportsman’s Paradise” and the retirement destination of choice for people from all walks of life. JOIN US TODAY! *We need your support!* And visit our website at www.tbcac.net Questions? E-mail us at: tbcac3@gmail.com.



MEMBERSHIPAPPLICATION

For new members, or RENEWAL form for existing members.

Annual membership is \$20.00 per single, \$30.00 per couple. *Not tax deductible under IRS rules.*

Name:	_____	Spouse:	_____
Address:	_____	City, State:	_____
Zip:	_____	Home Phone	_____
		Lake Phone:	_____
Occupation:	_____	E-mail Address:	_____
Dues amount:	_____	Donation enclosed:	_____

* Providing an e-mail address allows us to quickly send you the Toledo Bend Alert electronically, keep you informed and save printing and postage costs.

With your paid membership, you'll receive our periodic newsletter, the "Toledo Bend Alert."

Make check payable to: TBCAC and Mail to: TBCAC, P.O. Box 983, Many, LA 71449.