

BAYOU BARTHOLOMEW ALLIANCE

NEWSLETTER

Summer 1999
Vol. 2.

President's Message

These are very exciting and challenging times for the Bayou Bartholomew Alliance (BBA) Board Members and the hundreds of people who have joined forces with us to improve the water quality, fish and wildlife habitat of the Bayou. Our first Newsletter, published last fall, emphasized that this is a long-term, collaborative effort, involving several agencies as well as hundreds of individuals. It also pointed out efforts we have undertaken to educate the public, including K-12 and higher education students, about the historical and ecological significance of this magnificent resource. If you did not get a copy of our first Newsletter, contact us and we will be glad to mail you one.

I want to take a moment to remind you that donations to the BBA are state and federal tax deductible. We received a few donations after our first Newsletter was distributed last fall. We are in the process of developing some fund raising activities. We need your help now to purchase some bottomland hardwood seedlings for fall/winter planting. We need donations to help meet matching requirements for some foundation grants. Any donation will be appreciated. For \$25 we can plant 100 seedlings; for \$100 we can plant 400 seedlings. You can readily see that we can accomplish a great deal with your donations. One hundred \$10 donations would allow us to plant 4,000 hardwood seedlings. A donation for seedlings is a way for you to provide something valuable that will be living and providing wildlife food and habitat for decades, maybe centuries. It's something to think about.

This Newsletter issue provides you current information on BBA Activities. Please consider making a donation to help us increase the pace and magnitude of our seedling planting program. Also, we welcome any suggestions you may have for improving our Newsletter and/or our activities. We are in this effort for the long-term. I hope you will become actively involved with us, if you aren't already.

Curtis Merrell
President

Volunteers Clean Up the Bayou

The Highway 15 bridge crossing Bayou Bartholomew was the site for a trash clean-up on June 19th. Twelve volunteers sacrificed their Saturday to help improve the image of the Bayou. Several pickup truck loads of trash were removed from the area stretching between Byrd Park and Hwy. 15. Items included the usual array of cans and bottles, as well as mattresses, grocery carts, furniture, and rolls of carpet. Future clean-ups are in the works. If you know of any areas in need of cleaning or would like to volunteer at future clean-ups, contact Dr. Bill Layer at (870) 879-4808. Those that participated in the most recent efforts include: Dr. Ed Pert and family, Carmen Pruitt, Debra Pruitt, Cindy Blackstock, Josh Blackstock, Carolyn Theis, Todd Lenger, Toni Shillings, Jason Phillips, and Dr. Bill Layher.

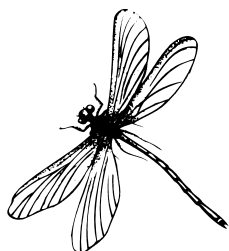


Continuous CRP Sign-Up

An important new opportunity to help you establish conservation buffers on your farm or ranch is the continuous CRP sign-up. This program allows you to establish certain conservation buffer practices on cropland and marginal pasture and enroll the land in the CRP at any time without having to go through the process of submitting a competitive offer. If you have land covered by an expiring CRP contract, you don't have to make an "all or nothing" choice about bringing the land out of CRP. You decide what land to enroll in the program.

Working with the staff in your local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) or conservation district office, you identify those buffer practices available under the continuous CRP sign-up that are most suitable for your land and meet your needs. You then submit an offer to your local Farm Service Agency office. That offer will be automatically accepted if all eligibility requirements are met.

To be eligible, you must have owned the land for the previous year. Cropland is eligible if it was planted or considered planted to an agricultural commodity in two of the last five crop years and is physically and legally capable of being cropped. The land does not have to be highly erodible.



Marginal pasture that is suitable for use as a riparian buffer is also eligible. Marginal pasture includes any land along streams or rivers that is grazed, whether previously seeded to grass or not. Most land covered by expiring CRP contracts that is determined suitable for a CRP buffer practice is likewise eligible.

It's that simple. Your local USDA Service Center staff will know specifically what technical and financial help is available to help you design and establish buffers, including assistance from state and local programs.

SE Arkansas Innovative Farming Tour Tuesday, July 27

This year's tour will start at the Dumas Convention Center and will leave at 9:00 a.m.! The tour will visit farms in Lincoln and Desha counties. The tour will feature water conservation through the use of more efficient practices such as multiple inlet and border irrigation, alternative crop production, the U of A's Cotton Research Verification Program, no-till cotton production, weed control in rice, and water quality research done on conventional tilled fields versus no-tilled fields. The itinerary for the tour is as follows:

- 9:00 a.m., Depart from the Dumas Convention Center
- Cotton Research Verification Program and Boll Weevil Eradication Equipment Display — Dick Goodgame farm
- Multiple Inlet / Side Inlet Irrigation for Rice and Border Irrigated Precision Ag Soybeans — John Freeman farm

- Alternative Crop Production - Irrigated Kenaf — Davey Farabough farm
- 12:00 p.m., Lunch at Dumas Convention Center with special guest speaker Ann Cash, Project Manager for the Boeuf-Tensas Water Conservation District
- Boll Guard and Roundup Ready Cotton Trials — Ken Holt farm
- No-till Cotton and Water Quality Research — Bill Teefer farm
- Weed Control in Rice — Rowher Field Station
- 3:00 p.m., Return to Dumas Convention Center

If you plan to attend please sign up at your local County Extension Office by July 22, or call Bill Kinkaid, Assistant Specialist Environmental and Natural Resources, with the Cooperative Extension Service at (870) 543-8530.

Bayou Bartholomew Alliance Board

Dr. Curtis Merrell
President

John Scott McClendon
Vice-President

Sonia Byrd
Jack Edwards
Cynthia Kimbrell
Howard Kimbrell
Robert Mitchell
George Pugh

Dr. Bill Layher

Hunter Education

The Bayou Bartholomew Alliance will schedule several hunter education classes in late summer and early fall. The Alliance recognizes the vital link between landowners and hunters and promotes ethical hunting and responsible behavior. If you know of individuals who are in need of taking the course, have them call Bill Layher at (870) 879-4808 for information. Classes will be advertised and are open to the public.



Dr. Bill Layher discusses Bayou Bartholomew with Ted Nugent.

Nugent Visits Bayou Bartholomew

Ted Nugent, rock star and hunter, visited Bayou Bartholomew in February. Nugent hunted deer along the Bayou and toured portions of the stream by boat. While most famous for his music, Nugent is an avid hunter and outdoor enthusiast. On his television show "Spirit of the Wild" he often criticizes the lack of conservation ethics in other entities. While visiting the Bayou Bartholomew, he praised the efforts of those working toward conservation of natural resources and "shot" several film clips to include in his TV show, contradicting his normal routine by commending someone else's efforts. Nugent received the "man-of-the-year" award last year from the Arbor Day Foundation for planting one million trees in a reforestation effort.

Technical Support Group to Meet

On July 20, 1999, representatives from many state and federal agencies, organizations, and private industry will meet at the Arkansas River Educational Services Cooperative building to discuss roles and efforts aimed at improving the Bayou Bartholomew. Many programs provide technical services, some funds, or man power to address various problems and their solutions. The meeting, which will begin at 9:00 a.m., will review who is doing what and allow the coordination of efforts to achieve maximum benefits for the Bayou Bartholomew, its resources, and adjacent landowners.

Stream Team Mini-Grant Received

The Bayou Bartholomew Alliance received a \$5,000 mini-grant from the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. The Alliance was able to purchase a canoe and motor to be used for assessing the stream. By floating the bayou, we will be able to identify trash dump locations, eroding banks, log jams, chemical barrels or other problems. Sites will be evaluated for clean-up or restoration needs and recorded using global positioning systems. By knowing where the problems are, it will allow the coordination of volunteer efforts to accomplish the work. The remaining funds from the grant will be used to purchase hardwood seedlings for restoration along streambanks on either the Bayou Bartholomew or its tributaries.

You can contact the Bayou Bartholomew Alliance by writing, calling or e-mailing:

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Layher BioLogics, Inc.
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Pine Bluff, AR 71603
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layher@earthlink.net

Alliance, Conservation Districts Receive Soil and Water Grant

The Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission awarded grants to the Bayou Bartholomew Alliance, the Jefferson County Conservation District, and the Lincoln County Conservation District.

The Lincoln County Conservation District received \$100,685 which will fund the employment of a conservation technician over a three year period. That individual will focus on developing conservation plans on lands within the Bayou Bartholomew watershed, especially plans that identify various farm bill programs to assist in riparian restoration that will benefit water quality.

The Jefferson County Conservation District received similar funding. A no-till drill was also funded to be used by area farmers who wish to experiment with this technology which ultimately reduces erosion from crop fields.

The Alliance received funds to purchase three computer systems, one for each conservation district and one for itself, to track projects, needs and restoration efforts. Also included in the Alliance funds were monies for newsletter development, paper, and some travel. Monies are also targeted to work with the City of Pine Bluff to develop an urban erosion and sediment control program, to conduct fish assessments for baseline information, and to build five demonstration structures of varying types to control erosion. All together the three conservation groups received \$369,750 to be utilized over a three year period. Most of these monies target planning, coordination, and tracking. To receive these funds the conservation districts and the Alliance must raise \$266,000 in the same time period. The Alliance is seeking donations to fund the restoration projects identified and planned, especially funds to purchase hardwood tree seedlings to replant stream banks and adjacent wetlands. Seedlings can be purchased for around 25 cents each. Volunteer time and equipment use donations also count toward the match. If you can help, please fill out and drop the form below in the mail. With your help the Bayou Bartholomew will become a resource we can all be proud of and continue to utilize in a wise manner.

Send to: Dr. Bill Layher, 7233 Camden Cutoff Rd, Pine Bluff, AR, 71603



To Restore Bayou Bartholomew I Would Like

- to donate _____ (a tax deductible donation)
to be used for ___ tree planting
 ___ educational programs
 ___ general funds to be used wherever
 needed most
 ___ a memorial gift in memory of

- € to donate time as a volunteer
 ___ to plant trees
 ___ clean-up Bayou Bartholomew
 ___ wherever I am needed

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Comments:

The Bayou Bartholomew Alliance was formed in 1995 and has been fortunate to receive support in the form of cash donations, equipment use, and volunteerism from individuals, corporations, and agencies. We would like to take this space to personally thank both past and recent donors. We regret any omissions and would appreciate your input if your name does not appear.

Past Donors

Foundations

- Weyerhaeuser Family Foundation
- Winrock International
- McKnight Foundation
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Agencies

- Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality
- Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (Stream Team Program)
- Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Organizations

- Three Rivers Audubon Chapter, Pine Bluff, AR

Stream Team Conference Sponsors March 27-29, 1998

- International Paper
- Arkla Gas
- Owen's Meats
- Layher BioLogic's RTEC Inc.
- Pine Bluff Transport
- Cattleman's Association (Richard Haralson)
- Tyson

History Project Sponsors

- Dermott Drainage District, Dermott, AR
- Lephiew Gin Company, Dermott, AR
- Pugh Brothers
- Portland Gin
- Union Bank
- McGehee Bank
- Arkansas Humanities Council
- Southeast Arkansas Bank

Recent Donors

(Since Fall 1998)

Individuals

- Neal Bearden, Atlanta, GA
- Eva McCollough, West Baden, IN
In memory of Samuel A. Summerland
- Virgil Trotter, Trotter Farms, Overland Park, KS
- Curtis and Telese Crabb, Johnson, AR
In memory of Dennis "Sam" Crabb
- Nell P. Allison, Dallas, TX
- Sonia Byrd, Pine Bluff, AR
- Deborah Miller, Pine Bluff, AR
- Charles Dicken, M.D., Rochester, MN
- Bob Katayama, Pine Bluff, AR
- John McClendon, SEARK Boats, Monticello, AR

Industry

- Potlatch Corporation, Warren, AR
- Hunter's Refuge, Pine Bluff, AR
- Travis Boating Center (Sportsman's Haven)
Pine Bluff, AR
- Take-a-Hike, Little Rock, AR

Foundations

- Weyerhaeuser Family Foundation, St. Paul, MN
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Washington, D.C.
- Winrock International

Agencies

- Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (Stream Team Program), Bryant, AR
- Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality, Little Rock, AR
- Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission, Little Rock, AR
- Arkansas Department of Corrections, Pine Bluff,

Lincoln County Conservation District Hires Technician

Keith Shepherd is the new Water Quality Technician for the Bayou Bartholomew. He will be working out of the NRCS and Lincoln County Conservation District office at Star City.

Keith's main objective will be to encourage landowners and operators to help keep sediment and nutrients out of the bayou as much as possible. He will also be working with Dr. Bill Layher and the Bartholomew Alliance.

Keith is the son of Troy and Carolyn Shepherd of Star City. He and his wife, Amy, have one son. Welcome Keith!!



Dr. Curtis Merrell and George Pugh discuss restoration efforts on the Bayou.

Restoration Efforts Update

Through grants received from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and trees donated from Potlatch Corporation, the Bayou Bartholomew Alliance planted 61,500 trees this past winter season. Thirty-nine thousand trees were planted the previous year. Plantings have occurred in Jefferson, Lincoln, Drew, and Ashley Counties. Species of trees planted include nuttall oak, water oak, willow oak, sawtooth oak, green ash, cherrybark oak, bald cypress, pecan, poplar, cottonwood, swamp chestnut oak, black walnut, overcup oak, and others. Restoration projects assisted by the Alliance target riparian (stream-side) corridors to help prevent erosion and provide maximum benefits to wildlife. Wetlands adjacent to the Bayou or on tributaries are also restored.



Newsletter Stories contributed by:
Bill Layher, Robert Hankins, Jason Phillips, Curtis Merrell, and Bill Kinkaid.
If you wish to contribute to a future newsletter contact Dr. Bill Layher (870)879-

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