




**7TH ANNUAL RIVER
SYMPOSIUM**

MARCH • 25 • 2022

**INNOVATION ON THE BAYOU:
HARNESSING NEW IDEAS FOR WATERSHED IMPROVEMENT**



Founded in 2013, the Bayou Vermilion Preservation Association (BVPA) board is comprised of community advocates, public servants, outdoor enthusiasts, and other leaders just like you!



**WE ARE A NON-PROFIT 501(C)(3)
ADVOCATING FOR THE
IMPROVEMENT AND
PROTECTION OF THE BAYOU
VERMILION WATERSHED.**



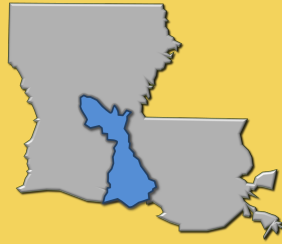
The mission of the Bayou Vermilion Preservation Association is to create awareness of our natural environment by providing education and outreach to the general community about ways to *conserve, protect, and enjoy* the Bayou Vermilion Watershed.

WELCOME TO THE BVPA!

Your ticket purchase for this event covers membership dues. We want to thank those who have renewed their memberships *and* welcome our new members!

You can exercise your membership by serving on a committee and attending our meetings and events.

ABOUT THIS EVENT



We are pleased to have you INNOVATE! with BVPA to make this symposium a success, help us realize our mission, and learn more about innovation on the bayou to achieve responsible and innovative watershed development.

This year's presentation topics will highlight how we can harness new ideas, including economic development around our river, and improve our quality of life while protecting natural resources in our community.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to thank our *generous sponsors* and those who have provided resources for our programming and given their time and expertise to make this event possible.

BVPA'S GOVERNING BOARD

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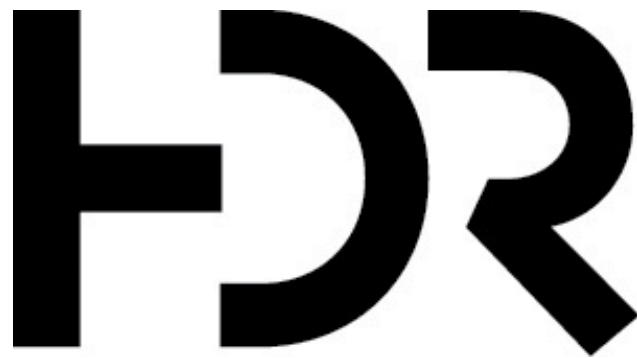
John Dupuis



BVPA, founded by Jan & Charlie Wyatt et al., had its first "core group" meeting in July 2012. We became a not-for-profit in August 2013.



7TH ANNUAL RIVER SYMPOSIUM VISIONARY SPONSORS



A special THANK YOU to our VISIONARY SPONSORS who have *exceeded* expectations in their support of this year's symposium.

AGENDA

Innovation on the Bayou:

Harnessing New Ideas for Watershed Improvement

- 7:30** Doors open for coffee and biscuits
- 8:00** Welcome from BVPA President, Amber Robinson
- 8:05** Mayor-President Joshua Guillory
- 8:15** Warren Abadie, LCG Traffic, Roads & Bridges – Lafayette Consolidated Government’s Innovative Solutions to Ongoing Problems
- 8:45** Tara Ross, Environmental Coordinator – From Grant to Guarantee: How Calcasieu Parish Police Jury's Routine Inspections on Residential Mechanical Sewer Systems Were Permanently Implemented
- 9:15** Joe Dale, CGI – The LEaRN Collaborative: Community Outreach, Citizen Science & Environmental Monitoring with the Internet of Things
- 9:45** Kelia Bingham, Acadiana Planning Commission – A Path to Permanent Progress: Regional Watershed Management in Acadiana

- 10:15** Coffee break

Your Partner in Preservation!

The BVPA creates positive action for the preservation and protection of our water resources by serving as a hub, connecting available resources, agencies, and manpower. We are so glad you could *INNOVATE!* with us.

AGENDA

Innovation on the Bayou:

Harnessing New Ideas for Watershed Improvement

- 10:30** Emad Habib, ULL Civil Engineering – Flooding in the Vermilion Watershed, Why and What Can We Do
- 11:00** Bryan Piazza, The Nature Conservancy – A Cleaner Gulf of Mexico, The Nature Conservancy’s Approach to Improving Water Quality across the Mississippi River Basin and in Louisiana
- 11:30** Stephen Ortego, SO Studio – Returning to the River: Trappey Cannery Redevelopment
- Noon** Ben Malbrough, Bayou Lafourche FWD – Bayou Rebirth: The Revitalization of Bayou Lafourche, the Lifeline of the Bayou Region
- 12:30** Lunch break, awards presentation
- 1:15** Panel Discussion – Moderator: Scott Brazda, KATC
Panelists: Gretchen Vanicor, UL Office of Sustainability
Michael Cullen, LAND Architecture
Bryan Piazza, The Nature Conservancy
Monique Boulet, Acadiana Planning Commission
- 2:15** Closing

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NOTES

PRESENTING SPONSOR



Speaker Biographies

Warren Abadie, LCG Traffic, Roads & Bridges

Lafayette Consolidated Government's Innovative Solutions to Ongoing Problems

Warren was born and raised in Lafayette, LA and still resides there with his wife and four children. He went to University of Louisiana at Lafayette and received his bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering (Computer Option) in 2003.

Warren was appointed Traffic, Roads and Bridges Department Director in 2020 where he oversees the Traffic Engineering Development, Signs and Markings, Traffic Signals and Streets divisions. He began his career with LCG in 2004 as an Engineer Aide. In 2005 he was promoted to Traffic Maintenance Supervisor where he supervised crews in charge of Traffic Signals, Signs and Markings. In 2009 he was again promoted to the Traffic Signal/System Engineer. In this position he performed traffic signal timing and system engineering analysis. In 2013 he was promoted to the position of City/Parish Transportation Engineer which oversaw the Traffic Engineering Development, Signs and Markings, Traffic Signals, Transit, and Parking Divisions.

PRESENTING SPONSOR

The logo for CGGI, featuring the letters 'C', 'G', 'G', and 'I' in a bold, red, sans-serif font. The 'C' and the first 'G' are large and rounded, while the second 'G' is smaller and more compact, and the 'I' is a simple vertical bar.

Speaker Biographies

Tara Ross, Environmental Coordinator Calcasieu Parish Police Jury

From Grant to Guarantee – How Calcasieu Parish Police Jury’s Routine Inspections on Residential Mechanical Sewer Systems Were Permanently Implemented

Tara works as an Environmental Coordinator for Calcasieu Parish Police Jury (CPPJ). Where she specializes in Stormwater projects that has helped evolve the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) General Permit for Calcasieu Parish. Her goal is to administer, implement, and enforce the provisions within the MS4 permit. Facilitating in maintaining and improving the quality of surface water and groundwater within the parish. Enabling the parish to comply with all federal and state laws and regulations applicable to stormwater discharges. Tara is also a Stormwater Compliance Manager, Certified Stormwater Inspector, and Professional Certified Operator of Water and Wastewater, with over 8 years of experience in Compliance, Permitting, Analysis, and Project Management. She is an experienced Program Development Coordinator with a demonstrated history of working in the government administration industry. She is skilled in Operations Management, Water Quality, Environmental Education, Environmental Management and Leadership. Tara holds a Bachelor of Applied Science (B.A.Sc.), Agriculture, Agriculture Operations, and Related Sciences Degree from McNeese State University.

PRESENTING SPONSOR



Speaker Biographies

Joe Dale, Spatial Data Scientist, CGI Federal

The LEaRN Collaborative: Community Outreach, Citizen Science, and Environmental Monitoring with the Internet of Things (IoT)

Joe Dale is a Senior Consultant and Spatial Data Scientist with CGI Federal. In addition to this, he serves as the Program Functional Lead for the Lafayette Engagement and Research Network, a citizen science project, smart cities project that is a collaboration between CGI, the Lafayette Consolidated Government, and the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Joe received his Bachelors degree in Watershed Hydrology and Management from the University of Arizona and has an MS in Fisheries Science and Aquatic Ecology from Oklahoma State University. Prior to working at CGI, Joe worked as a Land Health Ecologist at The Great Basin Institute in Nevada. Self-proclaimed 'honorary Cajuns', Joe and his family have called Lafayette home for 7 years.

PRESENTING SPONSOR



Speaker Biographies

Kelia Fontenot Bingham, Watershed Coordinator, Acadiana Planning Commission

A Path to Permanent Progress: Regional Watershed Management in Acadiana

Kelia Bingham is a Planner II with the Acadiana Planning Commission. She is the Watershed Coordinator for Region 5 of the Louisiana Watershed Initiative. Kelia has previously worked for the Coastal Wetlands, Planning, and Protection Act, Lafayette Consolidated Government, Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, and as a high school math and science teacher. Kelia has a professional history of working in the federal, state, and local government environmental sectors for the past 25 years. Her professional background includes overall watershed management, environmental education, nature-based solutions, stormwater regulations, and coastal Louisiana processes. Kelia received her B.S. in Biology from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette in 2000 and a M.Ed. from Louisiana State University in 2004. She resides in Lafayette with her husband of almost 16 years, their 7-year-old daughter and four very spoiled cats.

SPEAKING SPONSORS



Speaker Biographies

Emad Habib, Founder and Chair of the Watershed Flood Center at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Flooding in the Vermilion Watershed, Why and What Can We Do: Insights from UL's Research

Dr. Emad Habib is an Endowed Chair in the College of Engineering and the Founder and Chair of the Watershed Flood Center at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. He received his doctoral degree in Civil & Environmental Engineering in 2001 from the University of Iowa. His research expertise is in surface hydrology with focus on extreme precipitation; hydrologic modeling; flood prediction; and water resource management. He published more than 70 peer-reviewed journal articles and several book chapters. He received the 2016 University Distinguished Professor Award, and other awards including the Journal of Hydrologic Engineering Best Journal Award and the Watershed Excellence Award from the American Society of Civil Engineers. He is a Lead of the Technical Design and Quality Team for the Louisiana Watershed Initiative, and has participated in the 2012 and 2017 Louisiana Coastal Master Plan Study. Dr. Habib is a Professional Engineer registered in the states of Louisiana and Texas.

SPEAKING SPONSORS



RAYMOND JAMES

Speaker Biographies

Dr. Bryan Piazza, Director of Freshwater and Marine Science for The Nature Conservancy in Louisiana

A Cleaner Gulf of Mexico, The Nature Conservancy's Approach to Improving Water Quality across the Mississippi River Basin and in Louisiana

Dr. Bryan Piazza, director of freshwater and marine science for The Nature Conservancy in Louisiana, provides scientific support and strategic guidance for freshwater and coastal conservation and restoration projects in Louisiana, the Gulf of Mexico coast and the Mississippi River basin. He has published on a number of conservation and restoration topics and is the author of a book titled *The Atchafalaya River Basin – History and Ecology of an American Wetland*.

Bryan's current projects include 1) the Atchafalaya River Basin Initiative – conservation and restoration of America's largest river swamp; 2) development and expansion of The Freshwater Network – an online decision support network for freshwater resources; 3) using science to support robust statewide watershed management planning and policy development in Louisiana; 4) using current and future river flows to assist in planning oyster habitat restoration across the northern Gulf of Mexico; 5) understanding the role of habitat and hydrologic restoration in nutrient cycling; and 6) using market-based approaches to incentivize conservation.

Is the Vermilion a *river* or *bayou*?

It's both! Some researchers and regulatory agencies say that the terms are interchangeable as they both describe flowing waterways. The northern part is more often thought of as a bayou, while the southern end is a tidally-influenced river.

Speaker Biographies

Stephen Ortego, AIA, Founder and Principal Architect of SO Studio

Returning to the River: Trappey Cannery Redevelopment

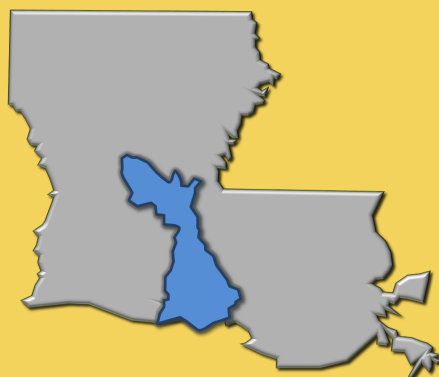
Stephen Ortego, AIA is the founder and principal architect of SO Studio, a multidisciplinary design firm located in downtown Lafayette. SO Studio focuses mostly on architecture, historic preservation, urban design and interiors. The firm also develops its own mixed-use projects, helping to improve the way communities live, work and play.

Before founding SO Studio, Stephen served as a member of the Louisiana House of Representatives. While a legislator, he served on the Commerce, Natural Resources, and Municipal committees. He also focused on French Immersion education, environmentally friendly initiatives, and healthcare.

Recently Stephen has teamed up with Marcel Wisznia of New Orleans to purchase and develop the former Trappey's Cannery on the banks of the Bayou Vermilion. The efforts began with placing the 14 structures on the National Register of Historic Places, creating an economic development district on the site, and ensuring that a State Cultural Products District was created for Freetown and the future Trappey Riverfront District. In the beginning of 2022 Stephen, along with his development partner, assembled a design team to create the vision plan for this development.

A WATERSHED is the area of land that drains to a ditch, coulee, bayou or river.

We are in the **TECHE-VERMILION WATERSHED.**



Speaker Biographies

Ben Malbrough, Bayou Lafourche Fresh Water District

Bayou Rebirth: The Revitalization of Bayou Lafourche, the Lifeline of the Bayou Region

Ben Malbrough, PE is a Professional Engineer who has a deep rooted passion for preserving Coastal Louisiana. Born and raised on Bayou Little Caillou, he saw firsthand the devastating progression of coastal land loss that he had grown up hearing about from his ancestors.

After graduating from Vandebilt Catholic in 1999, he headed north to LSU. After receiving his Bachelor's Degree in 2004 and his master's degree in 2009 in Civil Engineering, he began his professional career at The Shaw Group in Baton Rouge.

In February of 2013, he took over as Executive Director of The Bayou Lafourche Fresh Water District. He is excited to be back home, but more so he is excited to have the opportunity to help turn Bayou Lafourche back into a resilient natural resource for both drinking water supply and as a conveyance channel for the invaluable fresh water and nutrient supply that the wetlands of lower Lafourche and Terrebonne have been starved of for many years.

Did You Know?

Resilient native landscapes are characterized by their ability to withstand regional hydrologic conditions, foster stormwater management, improve surface water quality, and provide a high wildlife value. Native trees, shrubs, grasses and vegetation are uniquely adapted to grow and thrive in the wetland and water-saturated landscapes of south Louisiana.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Innovation on the Bayou, how do you harnessing new ideas for watershed improvement?

Scott Brazda, Panel Moderator

Scott Brazda is a news anchor/reporter for KATC-TV in Lafayette and hosts the station's popular "Spirit of Acadiana" segment. He co-founded the St. Jude Acadiana Dream Home Project and has won seven Associated Press awards for his reporting and storytelling.

For 13 years, he served as executive director of The Stuller Family Foundation and created a Junior Philanthropy program which laid a foundation of giving with the future leaders of Acadiana.

Scott has been a member of the adjunct faculty of the Communications Department at the University of Louisiana since 2000, and is a freelance writer for a number of regional publications.

A graduate of Teurlings Catholic High and the University of Louisiana, and Scott and his wife Suzanne are the proud parents of 21-year old Sophia and 14-year old Nick.

Panelist: Michael Cullen, LAND Architecture, LLC

Michael Cullen is an area leader in land planning and landscape architecture design. Cullen, a graduate of the LSU Robert S. Reich School of Landscape Architecture, worked for Fenstermaker engineering following an internship in Japan and graduation from LSU. Cullen's designs draw on his study of landscapes and ecosystems around the world. His informed and artful use of earth forms produce functional, aesthetically pleasing stormwater solutions for sites of all sizes.

Under Cullen's direction, LAND Architecture's staff has expertise in complex projects that include development master planning, stormwater detention, green infrastructure, urban design, and low impact development. LAND also specializes in traditional landscape architecture for residential, commercial, institutional, and municipal design.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Innovation on the Bayou, how do you harnessing new ideas for watershed improvement?

Panelist: Bryan Piazza, The Nature Conservancy

Dr. Bryan Piazza, provides scientific support and strategic guidance for freshwater and coastal conservation and restoration projects in Louisiana, the Gulf of Mexico coast and the Mississippi River basin. He has published on a number of conservation and restoration topics and is the author of a book titled *The Atchafalaya River Basin – History and Ecology of an American Wetland*.

Panelist: Gretchen Vanicor, Director of Sustainability at UL Lafayette

Gretchen Vanicor is the advisor to the University President on the environmental impacts of all University operations, including energy, water, stormwater management, transportation, planning and development. Her office leads the University in institutionalizing sustainability throughout the campus and improving the quality-of-life amenities for the whole community. The campus now has a zero waste strategy which included an overhaul of waste and recycling systems that resulted in 53% reduction in hauling costs and more than 1,200% increase in recycling diversion, a food recovery program from dining services, Goodwill, not Landfill program for moveout, and Good to Geaux reusable to-go dining system. The Office led an interdisciplinary effort to create a Green Infrastructure Master Plan which won 1st Place in the EPA Campus Rainworks Challenge. The Office of Sustainability also works with faculty and researchers to increase sustainability in the curriculum for all students and coordinates the Campus as a Living Lab initiative. The University was recently awarded a STARS Silver rating by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education for their whole-campus, comprehensive approach to sustainable development and resiliency.

Gretchen is a lifelong Acadiana resident having grown up in Iota. She now lives in Youngsville with her husband, David, two children, John-Thomas and Rosalie, and rescue dog, Teddy.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Innovation on the Bayou, how do you harnessing new ideas for watershed improvement?

Panelist: Monique Boulet, CEO, Acadiana Planning Commission

Monique serves as the Chief Administrative Officer for the Acadiana Planning Commission, APC, serving Louisiana Planning District 4. Boulet was instrumental in the creation of the APC in 2015, building a regional organization that facilitates pooling the resources of local governments as Acadiana approaches common problems. Working through numerous legal and political hurdles, Boulet led the effort to regionalize transportation planning in the Lafayette urbanized area with the formation of the Acadiana Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Following the Louisiana floods of 2016, Boulet worked with FEMA, USACE, EDA, GOHSEP, CPRA, OCD and DOTD as the pilot region for the Louisiana Watershed Resiliency Study. She worked closely with state and federal agencies to develop what watershed planning could look like in Acadiana and Louisiana. Following the pilot program Boulet led the APC in developing a watershed project selection process to disburse the first HMGP regional allotment of \$25 million prioritized to address drainage issues. APC is now serving as the fiscal agent for the Louisiana Watershed Initiative Region 5 watershed.

APC was funded by USDA to conduct a comprehensive assessment of existing broadband facilities and infrastructure needed to support future broadband expansion in Acadiana's rural communities. She now leads the Acadiana Regional Fiber-to-the-Home Initiative receiving the 2nd agency fiber grant for a new total of \$40,000,000 for fiber-to-the-home internet service in Acadiana.

Boulet received her Master of Business Administration in the Executive Program from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette in 2015. She was born and raised in Acadiana, is married to David Boulet and is the mother of 4 children: Kathleen, David, Zachary and Samuel.

JUMP ON BOARD!

TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY

- Pick up litter
- Use a rain barrel
- Pick up pet poop
- Bag and compost yard waste
- Properly dispose of chemicals
- Wash vehicles over grassy areas
- Plant natives to reduce pesticide use
- Install a rain garden to slow stormwater down

TO STAY INVOLVED

- Visit a Riverside park
- Check out regional paddle trails
- Participate in community programming
- Attend events focused on resource conservation
- Follow BVPA and our partners on social media
- Join the Embrace-A-Space program through LCG



The Vermilion, and all Louisiana waterways, are ours to enjoy and protect!



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WHY SHOULD WE PROTECT AND IMPROVE OUR WATERSHED?



**Watershed conditions
impact our lives.**



**Clean Watersheds
support our economy.**



Watersheds provide:

- Clean surface water
- Fisheries
- Outdoor recreation
- Eco-tourism





Programming

VERMILION RIVER ALLIANCE

The Vermilion River Alliance (VRA) was founded by BVPA in July 2014 and is managed by the BVPA President. The VRA is comprised of multiple agencies across St. Landry, St. Martin, Lafayette and Vermilion Parishes. Parish Presidents, Mayors, Police Juries, LDEQ, Soil and Water Conservation groups and other stakeholders are generally represented at the meetings.



RAIN BARREL ART PROGRAM

The rain barrel art program is an annual collaboration of BVPA, LCG, Project Front Yard, LUS, and Lafayette area schools. This art contest, geared toward middle and high school students, promotes drinking water conservation, stormwater management, and public art.



STORM DRAIN ART PROGRAM

2018 was the inaugural year of the storm drain art program. Our partners include LCG, Project Front Yard, Habitat for Humanity, ULL, BVD, and the ACA. Ten drains have been painted by local artists to illustrate the need for watershed protection. The art work symbolizes local ecology, culture and community.



STATE OF THE RIVER MEETING

The first state of the river meeting was held in May 2018. Held annually, this public meeting covers the latest information on water quality and sampling initiatives, fish and wildlife, and current efforts being made by various groups to improve the watershed. BVPA board members are available for questions, refreshments are served, and networking is encouraged.



WATER SAMPLING PROGRAM

The Long-term Water Quality Sampling Program has grown over the last five years. Through the coordination of Donald Segura, Director of Teche-Vermilion Fresh Water District, and the cooperation of our partners, we sample both the Bayou Teche and Vermilion River. Currently there are a total of 19 sample points throughout five parishes.



REVIVING RESILIENT LANDSCAPES

The BVPA and other *Partners in Preservation* hosted a series of educational workshops throughout the watershed. Participants learned about stormwater management and resiliency through native plantings, had an opportunity to install a demonstration area, and received advice and complimentary plants.



Follow us on Facebook to learn about future events!

**Thank you for being a
Partner in Preservation!**



EST. 2013

**BAYOU VERMILION
PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION**