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### Louisiana – the state of the air

ir quality in Louisiana is improving and on Wednesday, May 7, DEQ, along with the EPA, industry, community groups and individuals got together at the Galvez Building to talk about air quality awareness and what it has taken to make these improvements.

EPA Region 6 Administrator Ron Curry came to Baton Rouge for this and other events, and he spoke about ozone and its effects on air quality and people's health as part of Air Quality Awareness Month. He also commended those present and everyone who has worked on improving air quality on their good work and cooperation. DEQ



Michael Vince, Senior Environmental Scientist, gives an overview of Baton Rouge's experience and successes in improving air quality. DEQ Secretary Peggy Hatch and EPA Region 6 Administrator Ron Curry look on.

Secretary Peggy Hatch thanked DEQ employees, industry, nonprofits and citizens for making air quality a priority and working in a cooperative manner to achieve air quality successes. Sen. Mike Walsworth, chair of the Senate Environmental Quality Committee attended and also spoke to the group.

"We always hear the negatives – rarely do we hear about the positives. I want to thank Peggy and I want the thank industry," Walsworth said. "We're moving in a great direction, and we're going to get there."

"It has taken everyone, working together, to improve that air quality," Hatch said, "And I want to thank you all for the effort."

The Baton Rouge area has seen its air quality improve in recent years, due to the hard work and collaboration of local industries, government, environmental groups and citizens, led by DEQ and EPA. Average ozone readings from 2011 to 2013 have allowed DEQ to begin working with EPA to designate the five-parish Baton Rouge area as attaining the health-based ozone standard.



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EPA Region 6 Administrator Ron Curry talks about the Baton Rouge area's collaborative efforts, which have helped make significant air quality improvement.

Gov. Bobby Jindal declared May as Air Quality Awareness Month to encourage Louisiana residents to learn more about ozone, how it forms and how it can affect their health. May is also EPA's Asthma Awareness Month, which highlights the connection between air quality and people's health.

"The data show that Louisiana's air quality continues to improve," Hatch said. "We can see that improvement in industry practices, a greater public awareness of ozone and the implementation of rules and regulations concerning air quality have made a difference. The efforts of many people have contributed to this accomplishment."

"The Baton Rouge area has made great strides in improving its air quality by working to reduce the harmful emissions that form ozone," said EPA Region 6 Administrator Ron

Curry. "With one in 10 American kids suffering from asthma, this benefits the health of Louisiana's families as well as the environment."

To continue the Baton Rouge area's success in reducing average ozone levels, the area is participating in EPA's Advance Program. This voluntary program gave Baton Rouge and other areas of the state's government, industry and citizen groups an opportunity to work with EPA and each other to reduce ozone-forming emissions. The Baton Rouge area has led the state in working with EPA air planning staff since June 2012 to identify ways to cut emissions and lower ozone levels.

DEQ Senior Environmental Scientist Michael Vince gave an overview of the state's history and progress. He explained that the lessons DEQ has learned in the Baton Rouge nonattainment area over the years are being incorporated into helping other metropolitan areas of the state that may be facing nonattainment. The EPA Advance Program allows these areas to identify pollution sources and take credit for actions taken to reduce them.

### Riding the Oregon Trail – one leg at a time

n June 8, Don Weinell will ride into the sunset. He'll do it again on June 9, and again on June 10, 11, 12 and every day over a two-week period. Weinell, an Environmental Scientist 3 in DEQ's Inspections Division, is pursuing a dream: bicycling the 2,200-mile Oregon Trail. It all started back in 2009 when Weinell was deployed with his Air Force Reserve unit in Qatar. He had a lot of time on his hands to read and being a history buff with a special interest in the Old West, he picked up a book about the Oregon Trail in Nebraska.

"As I was reading along in the book, I was pulling maps up in Google Earth so as to try to orient myself as to where all these places were, and gradually I started to see that even from space you can see the tracks of the Oregon Trail that were made 150 years ago or more by the wagons," Weinell said. "I gradually got more and more interested in it,



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and eventually said 'I should try and bicycle that." It became a top item on his bucket list, something he planned to do after retirement. Then something happened that moved him to change his schedule.

"I used to work with a guy here named Bob Gillette. He was one of our water inspectors, a little bit older than I am. For years we used to do the Mississippi River sampling, and for years he talked about all the things he was going to do when he retired. Well, in the spring of 2009, he retired. About August he got diagnosed with cancer. Then in April 2010, he passed away. He didn't get to do any of it. I said I'm not going to wait. So even though I don't have time to do the whole thing at once, I'm going to break it up and just do what I can when I can," Weinell said.



Don Weinell's bike and equipment that he will use to ride this leg of his Oregon Trail adventure.

So every summer, starting in 2012, Weinell has ridden a portion of the trail, beginning at Independence, Mo. That first year Weinell pedaled about 500 miles to Kearney, Neb. "Then last year, I rode from Kearney, Neb., to Casper, Wyo., and that was roughly 600 miles. This year it'll be from Casper, Wyo., to Twin Falls, Idaho, just shy of 700 miles. Each year it just got a little bit longer," he said.

He rides a steel-framed touring bike that he has outfitted himself. His rig includes a small, single wheeled trailer equipped with "panniers" – side bags. "My clothing, my camping gear, some of my food – it all goes in there," Weinell said. He carries a simple cell phone (with a solar-powered charger), a point-and-shoot camera, some foul weather gear and camping necessities. He also has a small tablet-style computer, "which I put all my maps on – Google Maps

and I can access those.



Don Weinell suited up and ready to head out riding the Oregon Trail.

"And I also have an app that does all the USGS topographical maps, and my tablet has a built-in GPS, so I can actually follow myself on the topo maps if I have to."

He doesn't need the maps too often. He plans his route carefully and allows for a 50-mile leg each day. "If you bike much at all, 50 miles is nothing. And it's not a race. I'll ride 10 or 12 miles and stop, take a break, drink some water. You've got all day long to do it," Weinell said.

The route he plots adheres as closely to the original Oregon Trail as geography and modern roads allow. The route includes "everything from 10 miles of interstate riding last year to double track jeep trails," he said. "The original Oregon Trail often evolved into county roads which later became state roads and in some places even an interstate was built



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right on top of it. So, sometimes I may be a mile or so off trail, sometimes I'm literally on top of it.

He camps mostly, but he doesn't rough it all the way. "I've camped at state parks, I've camped at little city parks. Every year, at least once or twice somebody will invite me to stay at their house. I stay in motels sometimes if the weather is really bad. It all depends on what's there." He tries to find lunch at restaurants as often as he can, but breakfast and dinner are usually eaten in camp.

"It's not like backpacking where you have to carry all of your food with you because it's going to be a long way to the next town. I usually carry a couple of days' worth with me. What I tend to do is eat something like, oh, a breakfast bar or granola bar in the morning 'cause I like to get going early. Around lunchtime if I'm around a town or something, I like to stop at a café or something like that. At the end of the day, I carry peanut butter and tortillas with me – that's like the basic food for bicycle tourists because the tortillas don't get smashed like a loaf of bread does and it's filling and easy and you don't have to mess with anything."

He rides alone, Weinell said, because "when you ride alone, the natives are more apt to come up and talk to you. And that's a big part of this, just getting to meet the people and learn a little bit about the communities you go through." It's that solitude that is the biggest danger on the trip, he said, not bears or wolves or mountain lions. If he has an accident out in the middle of nowhere and there is not cell phone access there, it could be a long time before help arrives. When he does have Internet connectivity, Weinell writes a daily blog complete with photos. His journal is posted on the website CrazyGuyOnABike. Friends and family can follow his progress online.

The last leg of his Oregon Trail journey will be in 2015. "Next year it will be Idaho to Oregon City, Ore. That's the official endpoint of the Oregon Trail," he said. "I figure if I'm that close to the Pacific Ocean, I'll ride another two days and dip my wheel into the Pacific Ocean. Then later, when I retire, I'll start at Independence (Mo.) and go the other way and go to the Atlantic. That way I can say that I finished my cross-country ride."

Weinell disassembles his bike and ships it to a hotel in his starting-point town. This June 6, he'll board a plane, fly to Wyoming and then spend the next day reassembling his bike. After that, he's off along an old route in search of new experiences, chasing those sunsets and making memories that won't wait for retirement.

Follow Don Weinell's Oregon Trail trip at: https://www.crazyguyonabike.com/doc/?o=1&doc\_id=8076&v=bO

## Claiborne Elementary wins 1st place in EPA's National Building Competition

contest was the furthest thing from my mind," Claiborne Elementary School principal Stephanie M. Tate said. But she reluctantly agreed to enter the EPA's National Building Competition "Battle of the Buildings" last year, and for the next 12 months, "energy conservation became part of our daily instruction."

And there she was on a beautiful May morning at the spotless new K-6 school, accepting first place in the competition. The Baton Rouge school had beaten out more than 3,000 other buildings across the country to win. DEQ Secretary Peggy Hatch was on hand to present the school with a Certificate of Recognition, and Hatch watched as EPA Region



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6 Administrator Ron Curry presented Tate with a framed certificate memorializing the achievement.

"You did something – all of you working together – that President Obama is very proud of you for doing," Curry told the assembled faculty, dignitaries and students. "You came out on top out of 3,000 and that's amazing."

Sandra Lizcano with Aramark, a facility management company that partners with East Baton Rouge Parish School District, had urged Tate to enter the contest. Aramark helped the parish avoid \$5.1 million in energy costs over a three year period. Using the company's energy program, the district has reduced its energy consumption by more than 19 percent.

The winning effort comprised energy saving techniques like switching off lights when rooms are empty, closing doors and windows when air conditioning is running and shutting off electronic devices at the end of the day. The school fine-tuned automated controls of the HVAC system to make sure lights were off in empty rooms and heat and air systems ran only when necessary. The result was a 45.9 percent savings in energy use. That translates into \$114,000 in savings.

The contest is also designed to raise energy awareness as well, and the students, staff and faculty at Claiborne Elementary found innovative ways to do that too. "We had reading and writing contests," Tate said. "Home room teachers held daily instruction in awareness."

"It was all designed around energy consciousness," Tate said.

East Baton Rouge School Superintendent Dr. Bernard Taylor was easily the most popular speaker at the event however. He told the mass of assembled students "you're winners" and that in recognition of their contribution, they would receive "surprises." The superintendent then handed out new basketballs, soccer balls, jump ropes, beanbags, footballs, markers, stopwatches and more, including a pizza party which drew loud approval from the students.

Keeping with the theme of efficient energy use, Taylor told the students, "we want you to burn as much energy as possible on the playground."



DEQ Secretart Peggy Hatch presents a certificate to Principle Stephanie Tate.



EPA Region 6 Administrator Ron Curry give Principal Stephanie Tate the First Place Plaque.



School Superintendent Bernard Taylor congratulates the students and faculty and brings some surprises including soccer and basketballs, jump ropes and a pizza party.



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### DEQ employees raise \$6,104.55 for the American Heart Association

he American Heart Association is the largest voluntary health organization working to prevent, treat and defeat heart disease, stroke and other cardiovascular diseases. These diseases, the Nation's No.1 and No.4 killers, claim more than 813,804 American lives a year.

DEQ employees raised \$6,104.55 for the American Heart Association this year. The drive to raise funds started at DEQ with a kickoff on Jan. 22 and ran through the 26th of April. Employees bought paper hearts and bracelets to earn free dress days. Employees held a bake sale to raise funds also.

The Executive Staff Gift Basket Raffle was a success. There were four baskets, one each from the Office of the Secretary, Office of Environmental Compliance, Office of



DEQ Secretary Peggy Hatch pulls the winners' names for the Basket Raffle.

Environmental Services and Office of Management and Finance. The baskets included a Kindle Fire, gift cards, YMCA memberships, Soda Stream Maker Starter Kit and espresso maker and much, much more.

DEQ had 24 registered walkers for the Heart Walk, which took place on Saturday, April 16. State employees have raised more than \$46,000 dollars this year and the Capital Area Heart Walk will match 31 cents for every dollar raised.

### Timeless Treasures Brownfields/Ready For Reuses ceremony in New Iberia

hen you see old, abandoned, unsightly pieces of property, buildings and land, don't you wonder what can be done about them? Well, that's what the homeowners and people of New Iberia wondered about the Timeless Treasures property on Bridge Street in New Iberia.

The Timeless Treasures site, named after the last tenants to use it as an antiques store, had been abandoned for a number of years. It was a real eyesore for the surrounding neighborhood. It's a small property but has an 80-foot front on Bridge Street directly across from Mt. Carmel School on one side and residences on the other. The property was originally a food store in the 1930s and became a gasoline



The Timeless Treasures site before remediation was a blighted property and an eyesore for the neighbors and the city of New Iberia.



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The Timeless Treasures site after completion at 121 Bridge Street in New Iberia.

station and auto repair shop in the 1940s. It remained that until 1989, when it became an antique store until the early '90s.

The property sported a single dilapidated concrete building with the remnants of a pump island, maintenance bay and metal supports for a canopy. When the site was assessed, it was discovered that gasoline was present and other constituents of concern. Those constituents turned out to be contamination of chlorinated hydrocarbons from the auto repair shop. Before the area could be reused, remediation and removal of the contamination had to be completed.

The city of New Iberia applied for a Brownfields Cleanup Grant and in September 2009, EPA awarded them \$200,000. The city then went about planning the cleanup. Public hearings were conducted and the community, particularly people who

lived near the site, offered suggestions, questions and ideas. Some of those were incorporated into the final project. Site cleanup began Aug. 23, 2010. In October of 2012, the Timeless Treasures site was awarded a Certificate of Completion by the DEQ Voluntary Remediation Program.

On May 20, a bright sunny morning, EPA Brownfields and Ready for Reuse personnel, DEQ Secretary Peggy Hatch and other staff joined New Iberia Mayor Hilda Daigre Curry and representatives from Leaaf Environmental LLC, Acadiana Regional Development, KourCo Environmental Services and Berard Habetz & Associates at the site to acknowledge the completion and those involved with the projects.

The ceremony started with Claire Renault, Project Manager for Leaaf Environmental, who gave an overview of the project and what it took to achieve the remediation.

DEQ Secretary Peggy Hatch welcomed the group.

"I want to congratulate everyone involved with this Brownfields and Ready for Reuse site," Hatch said. "This project showcases what can be done with contaminated properties through remediation and cooperation."

Mary Kemp, EPA Region 6 Brownfields Section Chief and Jeanne Schulze, RCRA Brownfields/Reuse Coordinator for EPA Region 6, spoke about their respective programs and participation.



Hilda Daigre Curry, Mayor of New Iberia, accepts a Ready for Reuse Plaque from Jeanne Schulze, EPA Region 6, RCRA Brownfields/Reuse Coordinator and DEQ Secretary Peggy Hatch



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Mayor Curry, who also addressed the group, accepted plaques from both the Brownfields and Ready for Reuse Programs. Certificates of Appreciation were given out to the city and the main participants in the success of the project.

"The citizens of New Iberia and I, personally, am very thankful to be able to clean up this blighted and contaminated property," said Curry. "We appreciate the opportunity through the EPA grants and the DEQ program to now have this beautiful green space that enhances the area and New Iberia."

Abandoned and blighted properties are an increasingly serious problem, here and throughout the country. The Timeless Treasures project not only cleaned up the property environmentally but created a green space that restored property values and is aesthetically pleasing. The site at 121 Bridge St. is now a beautiful public green space that has restored the area and complements New Iberia's historic downtown.

### **Louisiana Alternative Fuels Conference and Expo**

he picturesque Lod Cook Alumni Center at LSU was surrounded by vehicles of all kinds. There were compressed natural gas vehicles, propane powered vehicles, natural gas vehicles, electric vehicles and even a huge CNG powered garbage truck.

Why were all these vehicles there? On May 16, the Louisiana Alternative Fuels Conference and Expo was taking place. The vehicles were there for the participants to look at, and, in some cases, drive. The display and the Ride and Drive activity were all part of the educational process concerning alternative fuel and its uses.

Inside, there were exhibits and an agenda packed with innovative ideas and great information on alternative fuels, their uses and the infrastructure required.



Secretary of State Jay Dardenne, 8th from left, and Agriculture Commissioner Mike Strain, 6th from left, pose with all of the winners of the first Louisiana Clean Fuels Leader Awards.

The Mayor of Shreveport, Cedric Glover, was the keynote speaker. He spoke about the history of using CNG in Shreveport.

"Look how much difference one decade makes," said Glover. "Shreveport has created a great case study. There were problems and hang-ups but now Shreveport is on the road to converting our transport system to a fully CNG fleet."

There were speakers and panels on all kinds of alternative fuels: propane, CNG and electric. The common thread that ran through nearly every speaker's presentation was that fleet managers love how alternative fuels are both domestically produced and cleaner burning. But the deciding factor for choosing alternative fuels was how much money they would save.

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"Working with your local utility and Clean Fuels Coalition early in the process of converting is extremely important," said Ann Shaneyfelt, Executive Director of Louisiana Clean Fuels. "This will ensure that you select the optimal solution for your business and operations."

Matt Sutherland, Board President for Louisiana Clean Fuels, commented that "bringing together alternative fuel experts and fleet representatives for a day of networking and educational sessions is a huge benefit for Louisiana. Reducing our dependence on petroleum and improving our air quality is an ambitious task, and these are the people who are going to make it happen locally."

At the conference, the first annual Louisiana Clean Fuels Leader Awards were presented. The awards were based on the amount of petroleum and greenhouse gases reduced by public and private fleets in LCF's annual reporting.



Republic Services CNG powered garbage truck dwarfs DEQ environmental scientist Yasoob Zia and DEQ Press Secretary Greg Langley.

The awards, sponsored by Trillium CNG, were presented by Lt. Gov. Jay Dardenne and Commissioner Mike Strain. Dardenne presented the award for Fleet of the Year to Bobby Nichols, chairman of Eagle Distributors. Eagle sells and distributes beer and non-alcoholic drinks to 10 parishes in Northwest Louisiana. In 2013, the company reduced 63 tons of greenhouse gases by utilizing 28 heavy and light-duty compressed natural gas vehicles. The family owned business intends to convert their service fleet of 79 vehicles to CNG over the next four years. Eagle Distributors is partnering with Ryder Truck Leasing to complete the CNG fleet improvement.

Dardenne also presented LCF's award for Municipality of the Year to the city of Shreveport for their work with SporTran, Shreveport's transit company. In the past year, the city of Shreveport has reduced 398 tons of greenhouse gases by utilizing compressed natural gas refuse trucks, transit buses and shuttle buses. Gene Eddy, Director of SporTran, accepted the award.

Agriculture Commissioner Mike Strain presented LCF's award for Innovative Project of the Year to the St. Landry Parish Waste Disposal District. St. Landry implemented a progressive BioCNG system. This system has taken the landfill waste and converted it into compressed natural gas, putting it to work for the parish. The system can produce 250 gallons, equivalent to gasoline measurements, of compressed natural gas at half the cost of gasoline. The biogas-based fuel is used to power St. Landry Parish Sheriff's Department cars, light-duty trucks and vans, and the solid waste district's utility trucks. As part of the project, the Sheriff's Department committed to converting 12 of its vehicles to bi-fuel capability, and added a passenger van fueled solely on CNG. Accepting this award was Katry Martin, Executive Director of St. Landry Solid Waste.

In addition to these awards, several other companies and fleets were awarded honorable mentions for their use of alternative fuels. Ann Shaneyfelt, Executive Director of Louisiana Clean Fuels, presented the awards for: Valued Partners to Entergy, Centerpoint and Atmos.



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## **DEQ On The Move**



DEQ Environmental Scientists Tomeka Prioleau and Rhyshima Parms-Green man the DEQ booth at Earth day.



DEQ Environmental Scientists India Ambeau and Tomeka Prioleau hand out information and demonstrate the Enviroscape to visitors at the Earth Day Festivities in downtown Baton Rouge.



Pictured above: DEQ Secretary Peggy Hatch, and DEQ employees Tyra Guthrie and Paulette Villere, prepare and hand out popcorn to employess on "Employee Appreciation Day"

#### **Employee Appreciation Week**

The success of a business, particularly a state agency, depends on the talents, ability, dedication and work ethic of its employees.

The week of May 5 through May 9 was public employee appreciation week and DEQ Secretary Hatch allowed casual dress day for employees through Thursday of that week. In addition, the executive staff hosted "Popcorn Time" for employees at the headquarters building. The executive staff will be going to the regional offices to host "Popcorn Time" for the employees there.

Employees enjoyed the popcorn and being served by the Executive staff. It was a way to say thank you to the staff for all their hard work and dedication to DEQ.





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### Who's Who At DEQ?



#### Rhyshima Parms-Green - Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Section

Parms-Green is a member of the Nonpoint Source (NPS) Pollution section in the Business Community Outreach & Incentives Division, under the Office of the Secretary. As a member of the NPS program and an environmental scientist, she educates people about NPS pollution and best management practices (BMPs) that can be implemented to reduce and control pollution in watersheds with NPS impairments.

She graduated from Louisiana State University with a degree in biological sciences and a minor in psychology in December 2006. While in college, she worked a year and a half with a company that successfully developed a technology that significantly reduces the cost of manufacturing protein-based drugs. After graduating, Rhyshima worked in the laboratory of a local hospital and then moved on to DEQ in the summer of 2007.

Parms-Green believes that a few important skills that help her to perform her job well are to be able to readily accept change; not be intimidated by challenges; and to be able to lead as well as to be able to work as part of a team. In addition to her duties with the Nonpoint Source Program, she enjoys swimming, reading, writing, making jewelry and spending time with her family.

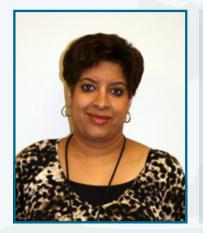
#### India T. Ambeau – Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Section

Ambeau received her B.S in Physics from Southern University and a Masters Degree in environmental science with a concentration in toxicology from Louisiana State University.

Ambeau joined DEQ in the Nonpoint Source Pollution section in 2012 as an environmental scientist.

Her favorite part of the job is educational outreach and you will often find her at outreach events in schools, at events like Earth Day and Chem Friends working with the public and school kids. Personally, she is a lover all things fitness and plays on the DEQ softball and football teams.





#### Crisalda Adams - Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Section

Adams is an Environmental Scientist 3 with the Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Section. Her duties include educating the public on the importance of protecting surface water from polluted stormwater runoff. She works with Louisiana communities, industries, and landowners in implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce and/or prevent the amount of nonpoint sources of pollution from getting into the state's waterbodies.

Adams graduated from Xavier University with a degree in chemistry in May 1991. Working in a Laboratory in private industry occupied her for approximately 17 years. She started her career in state government with the DHH (Office of Public Health) laboratory in the metals section. After 4 years, she joined the DEQ laboratory in the metals section.





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#### **Gregory Waldron- Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Section**

Waldron, who works with the Nonpoint Source Pollution Group as an Environmental Scientist 3, was recently detailed to the interim supervisor position of the section. He has been employed by the Department and been a member of the Unit for six years.

He received a B.S. degree in agricultural management from the University of Florida and worked as a graduate assistant in the Agronomy Department at Louisiana State University. He received a Master of Science degree from Louisiana State University in soil science.

Waldron has always enjoyed using scientific and mathematical principles to solve technical problems, and is dedicated to the Department's mission of protecting our environment.

#### **Andy Venuto- Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Section**

Venuto started work at DEQ as a student worker in 1998 while he was studying at Louisiana State University. He worked at the computer helpline for a year and then, still as a student, worked in the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Group. He transferred to the Nonpoint Source Section about a year ago, and while he still does GIS, he is enjoying learning about the program and how it operates at DEQ.

Venuto received his degree in geography from LSU in 1999, and was hired at DEQ as an employee shortly thereafter. He enjoys using GIS in problem solving and spending time with his family.



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

#### 4th Quarter 2013 Enforcement Actions:

http://www.deg.louisiana.gov/portal/DIVISIONS/Enforcement/EnforcementActions.aspx

#### 4th Quarter 2013 Settlement Agreements:

http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/DIVISIONS/Enforcement/SettlementAgreements.aspx

#### 4th Quarter 2013 Air Permits:

http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/tabid/2922/Default.aspx

#### 4th Quarter 2013 Water Permits:

http://www.deg.louisiana.gov/portal/tabid/2899/Default.aspx

#### 4th Quarter 2013 Solid and Hazardous Waste Permits:

http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/divisions/wastepermits.aspx