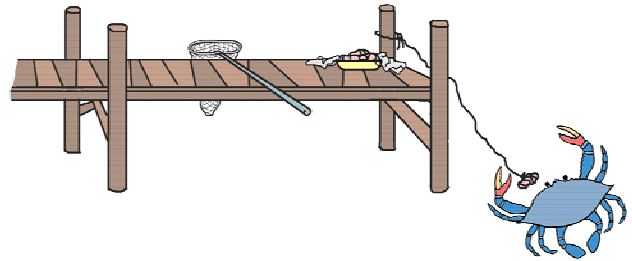




Crab Lines



My Dear Friends,

I would like to cordially invite you to participate in the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program's upcoming **Back to the Bayou 2003** events. This year's events include something for everyone—a gathering in Donaldsonville, a 4-day *Paddle Bayou Lafourche* canoe and kayak trip, daytime and evening festivities plus opportunities for bayouside residents to show their support.

Bayou Lafourche winds through the middle of the Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary, linking the two basins at the heart. This beautiful and elegant bayou is also the common thread that links the many communities from Donaldsonville to the Gulf of Mexico. The rich waterway, its bayou culture, its history and its charm are all cause for celebration; the threats to this imperiled homeland are cause for alarm.

To participate, you may choose to paddle any or all of the 4- day journey from Donaldsonville at the bayou's origin at the Mississippi River to the seafaring town of Lockport. You will be rewarded for your hard work with surprising glimpses of wildlife and vegetation, and an intimate view of life along the bayou. Educational presentations on bayou history and culture, our wetlands loss and a proposed restoration project on the bayou will take place during scheduled lunches.

You will love the special evening events we have planned for both paddlers and the public. At Artist's Night and dinner at Madewood Plantation you will meet Mike Tidwell, author of *Bayou Farewell*, as well as poets, playwrights, illustrators, carvers and landscape artists involved in saving our precious wetlands. Gator/Reggae Night and dinner at Jean Lafitte Park will introduce you to C.C. Lockwood and his alligator photo exhibit, and Mr. Tab Benoit who will be joined by the Kane & Mabel Reggae Band will serenade you. The final evening is also a special treat with many offerings of food, dance, story and culture by The United Houma Nation as part of First People of the Bayou Night.

I would encourage all bayou residents to show their support for this outstanding event by decorating their back yards with flags and signs and greeting the paddlers with waves and smiles, music, or even holding a Paddle Bayou Lafourche bayouside party. There will be photographers and filmmakers paddling with us, and your offerings may well go down in history.

Paddle Bayou Lafourche is part of a larger project called the *Bayou Lafourche Initiative* whose goal is to kindle stewardship of our beautiful bayou. With initial support from the U.S. EPA Gulf of Mexico Program, the Estuary Program and its foundation are pleased to have support this year from the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources through its Coastal Restoration Division.

Please join us as we as we celebrate this great gift of Bayou Lafourche and her wetlands. Through the efforts of the paddlers, bayouside and paddle trip supporters, we will speak with one voice for the restoration of our beleaguered wetlands and culture.

On another note, one topic discussed at recent BTNEP Management Conference Meetings is the practice of cypress logging. This subject is one of several being discussed at the Southern Forests Conference on Survival and Sustainability on Saturday, October 25, 2003 from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. At the Tulane University Law School. The Tulane Green Club and the Tulane Environmental Law clinic are sponsoring the conference. Co-Sponsors include the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana, Mississippi River Basin Alliance, the Sierra Club, and the Woodland Trail Association. For registration information and conference agenda, please contact the Tulane Green Club at greenclb@tulane.edu.

For a complete schedule and more information visit our website at www.btnep.org , call 1800-259-0869 or email deborah@btnep.org.

I look forward to seeing you on the bayou!

With Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kerry M. St. Pé". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Kerry St. Pé, Program Director,
Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program