

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



Bayou Teche & Lower Atchafalaya River

Louisiana's most
historic and culturally significant waterway

To Members, Sponsors and Friends of The TECHE Project



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Council:**

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Patti Holland, Executive Director

As I reflect upon the accomplishments of The TECHE Project during 2025, I'm struck by the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. when he spoke about finding purpose. He said, "True happiness and meaning come from seeking and finding ways to serve." When The TECHE Project was created in 2010, a handful of people saw a need to serve by volunteering to clean trash out of the bayou. Their enthusiasm grew into a nonprofit with hundreds of supporters (members and contributors) that happily serve to make the Bayou Teche Corridor a better place to live. We are liberated by the knowledge that, as a group, we have improved the ecological and cultural values of the bayou we all love. We have removed over 60 tons of trash, built a first-class national paddle trail spanning over 130 miles and, now, we are working to bring attention to the cultural and historical aspects of the Bayou Teche Corridor.

In 2025, we held a gathering at Maison Stephanie in Arnaudville where we learned about the development of the original settlement and the restoration efforts that were undertaken to return the structure to its former grandeur. We also installed a Legends & Lore Marker to highlight the tale of pirate Jean Lafitte's contraband tunnel under the old Mount Caramel Academy on Bayou Teche in New Iberia. We are currently undertaking a larger folklore project by gathering oral stories centered around the lives and history of people who call Bayou Teche their home. The Bayou Teche Oral History Initiative will be shared with the public in the future to further emphasize the cultural significance of the communities along the waterway.

Dr. King believed that "This country will not be a good place to live unless we can make it a good place for all of us to live in." I think his sentiment can apply to the bayou, and I further believe that positive change starts at the local level. Thank you for your part in fulfilling The TECHE Project's mission to make the Bayou Teche a better place for all of us.



**The TECHE
Project
Quick Dip**

ENRICH It

The vision of the Bayou TECHE Renaissance is dependent upon the ecological health of the Bayou Teche corridor.

Bayou Operations

In April, we took part in the state's "Love the Boot" campaign by cleaning Paddle Trail amenities and surrounding grounds. In May, we conducted a volunteer bayou cleanup in New Iberia with the assistance of the Louisiana Bayou Society. Our grand total of garbage removed from the bayou is now pushing 61 tons!

Wood Duck Program

Our Nest Box Program is thriving with 63 participants rearing wood ducks in over 90 nest boxes. We estimate that over 700 wood duck fledglings are produced annually from our nest boxes. Brent Miller continues to provide helpful tips about nest box management via social media.

Bank-line Management

Director Patti Holland spoke on this topic at a Water Quality Task Force meeting in Lafayette in December. We continue to give technical assistance to landowners on bank restoration, and our Bank-line Management Guide is always available at techeproject.org.

Nature in Acadiana

In partnership with Acadiana Native Plant Project and Bayou Vermilion Preservation Association, we recorded radio spots about "Nature in Acadiana" to air indefinitely on KRVS on Tuesday mornings. Listen in!

EXPLORE It

The Bayou Teche Renaissance promotes recreational experiences as a way to enjoy the history and culture of Bayou Teche.

Bayou Teche National Paddle Trail

Promotion of the trail is a primary focus for us going forward. To that end, we are working with state and local tourism offices to get the word out both locally and nationally. We are involved in the state's new "Love Your Waterways" campaign. Be on the lookout for video footage from our Shake Your Trail Feather Paddle Parade!

Nature-Based Tourism

Promoting tourism through low-impact recreation on Bayou Teche will continue to be a priority. In 2025, we listed all 15 Bayou Teche National Paddle Trailheads on the ALLTrails App. We are also working with landowners to promote camping opportunities along the trail. We continue to work with other nonprofits, businesses, and local government officials to increase recreational tourism opportunities on Bayou Teche, and are happy to see the addition of a Wanderlust kayak rental kiosk at the Kayak Park in New Iberia.



EMBRACE It

As communities turn toward the water, the Bayou Teche Renaissance is becoming a reality.

Community Ambassadors

Port Barre - Gayle White

Leonville - Mary Finley

Arnaudville - Myran Chautin

Cecilia - Brandon Ballengée

Poche Bridge - Bryan Taylor

Breaux Bridge - Cory Werk

Parks - Joey Abshire

St. Martinville - Eric Martin

Loreauville - Nick Bourgeois

New Iberia - David Dahlquist

Jeanerette - Monica Duplantis

Charenton - Sherry Pinell

Baldwin - Jaunita Clements

Franklin - Tony Scelfo

Centerville - Sam Hanagriff

Patterson - Luke Bienvenue

Twilight on the Teche

To show our appreciation for our members, we held a "Twilight on the Teche" membership party at the picturesque Maison Stephanie in Arnaudville in April. Over 75 people enjoyed food, live music, and yard games.

Youth Workshop

We held our third-annual "Geaux Paddle" youth recreation workshop at the end of May. Ten youth ages 10-14 participated in paddling, a water testing experiment, trash pickup, education on bayou ecology, and a painting project with artist Jeanne Judice.

Legends & Lore

In September, we commemorated a new "Legends & Lore" marker about pirate Jean Lafitte on the grounds of the old Mount Carmel Academy in New Iberia. We partnered with the Center for Louisiana Studies and William G. Pomeroy Foundation on the project, which marks the site of a legendary tunnel leading to Bayou Teche.

Outreach Efforts

Director Patti Holland spoke at Bayou Vermilion Preservation Association's (BVPA) River Symposium in May, and we manned a table at BVPA's State of the River event in October. Holland also gave a tutorial to the Vermilion River Water Quality Task Group on bank-line restoration techniques. In addition, we participated in Atelier de la Nature's Halloween event and networked at the Keep Louisiana Beautiful Conference in Baton Rouge.

Shake Your Trail Feather

Over 185 paddlers attended the 2025 Shake Your Trail Feather Paddle Parade, which included a dragon boat for the first time. The party continued at Parc des Ponts in Breaux Bridge with live music by Amis du Teche and a kayak auction. Our annual celebration of the Bayou Teche Paddle Trail continues to rise in popularity attesting to the attraction of paddling as a form of recreation in Acadiana. The next celebration will be October 17, 2026!



What's In Our Future?

In 2026, we plan to continue our existing programs, partnerships, and events. [Here's what's new for the coming year:](#)

Bayou Teche Oral History Initiative - This project will record stories about life along Bayou Teche. We are looking for participants in one of the four parishes along the trail. If you would like to share your story with us or have a candidate to suggest, please email techeproject@gmail.com. More details about this project will be released later in the year.

Promotion of the Bayou Teche National Paddle Trail - We are updating our Paddle Planner and working with the state on their Love Our Waterways campaign, which will launch in May.



2025 Financial Summary

Memberships and donations provided the majority of financial support for The TECHE Project in 2025, and we continue to receive strong funding support from local governments and our fundraising efforts.

Our financial management team has assured that the total assets of this nonprofit are stable.

Contributions by Donor Type



Support & Revenue: \$33,720
Expenses: \$42,452
Current Assets (96% cash): \$57,145

Estimated Economic Value By Program Element (2010–2025)

Water Quality/Cleanups: \$48,000
Paddle Trail Dev.: \$1,800,000
Bank-line Restoration: \$15,500
Workshops (Ecology/Youth): \$9,000
Cultural/Economic Dev.: \$125,000

Total: \$1,997,500

2025 Special Contributors

Bayou Banker (\$100 to \$500)

Carrington Tutwiler
City of New Iberia
Don & Barbara Meyer
Jared Normand
David Dahlquist & Mary Ubinas
Mark Patout
Mark Sinclair
Poche's Meat Market
Russell's Food Center
Ruston Broussard

Kayak Packer (\$500 to \$999)

Doc Voorhies
Gareth & Lucy Stevens
Melissa Hebert
Rynela
SLEMCO
FM Bank
St. Martin Parish Tourism
Teche Vermilion Fresh Water District

Brown Water Lover (\$1,000 to \$2,499)

Adam & Tricia Johnson
Atchafalaya National Heritage Area
Courtesy Motors
Pack & Paddle

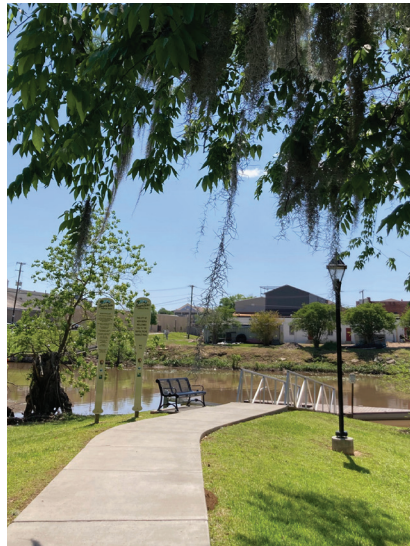
Wood Duck Nester (\$2,500 to \$4,999)

Teche Royalty (\$5,000+)

Dr. Marelle Yongue & Gary Schoelerman

Lifetime Members

Alan & Brenda Broussard
Barry Landry
Bayou Teche Brewing
Bayou Teche Experience
Courtesy Motors
David Dahlquist & Mary Ubinas
Dr. Marelle Yongue & Gary Schoelerman
Metal Shark Boats
Pack and Paddle
Patrick & Elizabeth Little
Sandra & Lloyd Marshall
Sean & Lesley Marshall
SLEMCO
Teche-Vermilion Fresh Water District
Trey & Gina Marshall



The TECHE Project Council deeply appreciates the growth of financial and in-kind support provided by individuals, businesses and public organizations and agencies from across the United States.

Please consider including The TECHE Project in your estate planning and beneficiary designations.

Business Members, Partner Organizations and Governments

Special thanks to our business members, partner organizations and governments that assisted The TECHE Project in 2025!

As of January 27, 2026, The TECHE Project is honored to have 146 individual and two-person memberships; 48 family memberships; and 23 business and government memberships, representing over 300 individuals!

Thanks to all who joined and renewed their faith in The TECHE Project!

Together, we are doing great things on the bayou!

Business Members

A&S Farms
Bayou Teche Brewing
Bayou Teche Museum
Courtesy Motors
FM Bank
Historic Map Company
Howard Ratliff Jr.
Howldog Wood Works & Framing
Little Big Cup
Pack & Paddle
Poche's Meat Market
SLEMC0

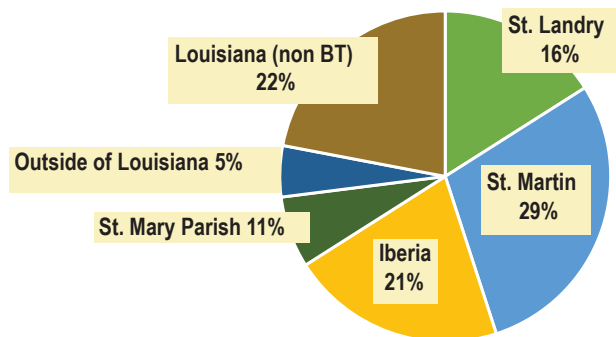
Partner Organizations and Government Agencies

Acadiana Native Plant Project
American Canoe Association
Atchafalaya National Heritage Area
Atelier de la Nature
Bayou Vermilion District
Bayou Vermilion Preservation Association
Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana
City of Berwick
City of Breaux Bridge
City of Franklin
City of Jeanerette
City of New Iberia
City of Patterson
City of Port Barre

City of St. Martinville
FHWA Recreational Trails Program
Keep Louisiana Beautiful
Lafayette Paddle Club
LA Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism
LA Department of Transportation and Development
LA Office of State Parks
LA Trails and Byways Program
Louisiana Iris Conservation Initiative
St. Bernard Elementary School
St. Landry, St. Martin, Iberia and St. Mary Governments & Tourism Offices
Teche-Vermilion Fresh Water District
Town of Arnaudville
Town of Baldwin
Town of Leonville
Village of Loreauville
Village of Parks



Membership Distribution (by Bayou Teche Parishes & Beyond)



ONLINE RESOURCES

AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD AT TECHEPROJECT.ORG

PADDLE PLANNER

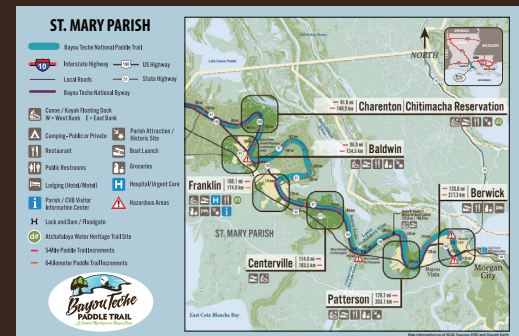
Our Bayou Teche National Paddle Trail Paddle Planner includes maps, safety tips, trip itineraries for each of the four parishes, a shopping list, travel times, Bayou Teche Bucket List and lots more.

Download the planner from our website or pick one up at a tourism bureau or visitors center in St. Landry, St. Martin, Iberia or St. Mary Parish.



PADDLE TRAIL MAPS

Easy-to-print maps by parish are available on our website. Each version includes safety information on the back, along with amenities like restrooms, camping, historic sites, etc. You can also find the maps at tourism bureaus and at outfitter Pack & Paddle in Lafayette. We suggest taking one with you on your next paddle trip.



BANK-LINE MANAGEMENT GUIDE

The TECHE Project has also produced a Bank-line Management Guide for landowners that details bank-line restoration techniques and provides insight on appropriate plants for erosion control and where to acquire them. The guidebook also addresses other landowner concerns such as sewerage treatment, groundwater retention measures and nuisance wildlife control.

