

MEDIATING A STATEWIDE ENVIRONMENTAL DIALOGUE IN LOUISIANA

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In November of 1991, a landmark agreement was reached to reduce environmental risk and improve management of Louisiana's unique natural and cultural resources. As partners in the consortium CONCUR, we served as mediators in what might be considered the first environmental treaty negotiation in Louisiana. This working paper presents a first-hand account of the agreement reached, and illustrates a series of challenges we faced as mediators.

The comparative risk project, known as the Louisiana Environmental Action Plan (LEAP) to 2000, coupled a **technical review of environmental risks** with a sustained dialogue to set statewide public policy goals. A Technical Committee (TC), comprised of university scientists and agency specialists, assembled the most current and relevant data available in the state to analyze risks posed to human health, natural ecosystems, and quality of life, respectively. For instance, the health working group compiled data for cancer and non-cancer risks; the ecosystem working group evaluated stresses to each of several habitat types; and the quality of life working group examined a series of monetary and non-monetary damages.

A Steering Committee comprised of 12 agencies worked side-by-side with a 35-member Public Advisory Committee over a period of 18 months. PAC members represented diverse constituencies that had seldom met amicably in the same room. Business and industry representatives included groups such as the Louisiana Chemical Association, Dow Chemical, Co Polymer; Waste Management Inc., and Louisiana Land and Exploration, state's largest land owner. Environmental representatives included the Sierra Club, the Nature Conservancy, Shreveport Green, and the Audubon Society. Also represented were the North Baton Rouge Environmental Association and the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers.

The combined Public Advisory and Steering Committee, known as the PASC, worked as the principal policy making body for the project. Members of the PASC negotiated and ratified both a provisional and final agreement, as they added their signatures to the project report.

The central element of the agreement is the **ranking of the 35 most important environmental issues in the state**. This ranking represents the priorities which project participants agree should be accorded to environmental problems in the state. Issues are ranked into one of three categories: issues of highest statewide risk, issues of high statewide risk, and issues of high localized risk and/or continuing concerns. The ranking took part in three steps. First, the Technical Committee analyzed the most current environmental data and assessed the risks posed to human health, Louisiana's ecosystems, and the quality of life. Second, the PASC reviewed the results of the TC's work and completed a **provisional ranking**, taking into account the technical committee's work. Third, the PASC and took into account the views of Louisiana citizens who participated in a statewide environmental summit and a series of 11 town meetings to complete a **final ranking**. The results are displayed in Table 1.

The ranking was accomplished concurrent with the drafting of a **vision statement** which sets a series of environmental policy goals for the decade ahead. The report also summarizes the major types of **obstacles that must be overcome** in order to reduce risk environmental risk. The Report concludes with **guiding themes for implementation**. Other chapters in the report

present a *brief definition of issues* ranked by the PASC and a detailed *overview of the steps in the LEAP to 2000 project*.

Taken together, this report is the product of the first facilitated multi-party dialogue in the history of Louisiana. Rather than presenting competing versions of facts and recommendations, this report represents a *negotiated single text*, endorsed by all the key parties. As a result of the unprecedented agreement among diverse constituencies, the **final report was endorsed by both outgoing governor Buddy Roemer (a Republican) and governor-elect Edwin Edwards (a Democrat)**.

Table 1: Final Ranking of Issues of Highest Statewide Risk for the Louisiana Comparative Risk Project

<p>Class I: Issues of Highest Statewide Risk</p> <p>Air Toxics Coastal Wetland Loss Industrial Wastewater Discharges Municipal Wastewater Nonpoint Source Pollution* Groundwater Contamination Lack of Land Use Management/Planning Indoor Air Pollution Pesticides Aesthetics Losses</p> <p>*Nonpoint Source Pollution was ranked equal with Groundwater Contamination.</p>	<p>The issues appear in the sequence in which they were ranked by the PASC. The PASC believes that the top three issues (in bold) deserve special attention as they were the issues of greatest significance across the Summit and eleven Town Meetings as well as the PASC Ranking.</p> <p>In all, 35 issues were ranked: 17 issues were ranked in the Class II: "Issues of High Statewide Risk"; 8 issues were ranked in the third tier of "Issues of High Localized Risk and or/Continuing Concerns". The PASC believes all of the 35 issues on the list are important, and that issues in Class III merit continuing monitoring and research.</p>
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The *Action Strategies Supplement* now nearing completion, are to present a series of policy options for reducing the risk associated with high priority issues. This document is being prepared as a draft for review and evaluation by the state agencies participating in the LEAP to 2000 project. Then, the PAC in conjunction with state departments, will select specific policy options and present the results to Governor Edwards in a *LEAP Implementation Report*.

Challenges in Mediating the LEAP to 2000 Project

As consultants to the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, we faced a series of challenges in helping the parties reach this agreement. In practice, this required that we work in a **dual role as mediators and environmental policy analysts**. Among the tasks we completed were process design, assisting in the presentation of technical information, and mediation of a ratified agreement. The balance of this article describes the challenges we faced, and the strategies we used to meet them.

In beginning the project, we faced two related challenges: gaining acceptance as neutrals, and gaining an understanding of current state politics and environmental issues.

Gaining Acceptance as Neutrals: When we were first retained by DEQ, the LEAP project had been underway for about nine months. The TC had largely completed its deliberations but the PASC had yet to reach any specific agreements. Project Director Regina

Thompson told us that the group was polarized, that there was little trust. She emphasized that it had become very difficult for DEQ staff to ensure that the agency's point of view was represented and at the same time to run the meetings in a manner that participants found even-handed.

Before we facilitated our first meeting in December, 1990, we interviewed several key participants. We asked questions about the background of PASC members, how they had been recruited, the interest which the organization brought to the dialogue, and the successes and failures of the LEAP project to date. In these conversations, we explained our task and our credentials. We emphasized that while we were being hired by DEQ, we had no stake in any particular outcome, but that we were committed to working with the parties to secure an agreement they could implement. We explained that as a result of our background as environmental planners, our doctoral training in dispute resolution at MIT, and our prior work at the Harvard Program on Negotiation, we were able to bring a set of tools that could help the parties work together more effectively.

DEQ, under the leadership of agency secretary Paul Templet, had adopted an aggressive posture toward the chemical industry--an industry that had long benefitted from tax subsidies and Louisiana's laissez faire approach to regulation. When we interviewed Ed Flynn, the representative of the Louisiana Chemical Association, he expressed pleasure that the agency was bringing in outside expertise. While he had some criticisms of the agency's handling of the project and was concerned that environmental groups had sought to introduce concerns that were not scientifically valid he was generally supportive of the objectives of LEAP.

We heard a very different view from Peggy Frankland, a leader of the environmental community in Lake Charles. She told us: "I'm a fifth-generation Cajun and I'm sick and tired of people coming down here and thinking they can dump any kind of toxic waste on us." These two comments encapsulated much of the tension inherent in the dialogue and helped us anticipate the need to prepare a series of groundrules to guide the group's interaction, described later in the paper.

Gaining an Understanding of State Politics and Environmental Issues: Whenever we begin a new public policy dialogue, we work hard to learn as much as we can about the local political situation, and about the issues at stake. We believe this preparation is absolutely essential to effective mediation.

In this case the major political backdrop was the contentious relationship between the industry--especially the oil and chemical industries--and the environmental community. Many environmentalists had felt shut out of decision making, and were eager to make their voices heard with the help of DEQ in the LEAP project. Members of the African American community had also been marginalized in the environmental policy making. Many chemical facilities had been located immediately next to low-income minority communities, and their representatives were anxious to ensure that LEAP addressed their needs. Still in the background, but coming up fast, was the gubernatorial election that would pit reformer Buddy Roemer against his rival, Edwin Edwards.

With backgrounds as environmental planners, a central part of our professional philosophy is to become as familiar as possible with the natural systems and patterns of development in the areas where we work. We knew that jetting in for meetings and reviewing documents was no substitute for first-hand experience, so we built in time early in the project for a series of site visits. To gain a better understanding of air toxics and facility siting, we traveled along River Road, the 120-mile Mississippi River corridor between New Orleans and Baton Rouge where 80 chemical facilities are located. To better grasp the causes and

consequences of coastal wetland loss, we visited small fishing communities such as Cocodrie in Terrebonne Parish on the Gulf Coast, and later in the project, visited the Atchafalaya Basin.

The Crucial Role of Formal Groundrules: At the first meeting we facilitated, we proposed a series of groundrules to meet several important objectives. It was essential for the stakeholders to recast their personal relationships, which had been marked by much disagreement and acrimony. PASC members had been accustomed to acting out the hallways and hearing rooms of the legislature, always resulting in apparent winners and losers.

One set of groundrules dealt with personal behavior. One asked parties to respect the personal integrity and values of all participants; another pointed out the importance of verbal commitments and obligated parties to report back to their constituents on the progress of negotiation. A lobbyist for the League of Women Voters queried: "Does this mean we have to be nice to each other outside this room?" We responded that behavior was of course a matter of personal responsibility, but that we hoped the LEAP project would set a positive precedent that could carry into other arenas.

Under the heading of "information sharing", a groundrule required each person to communicate his or her interests on issues being addressed. Other important groundrules defined a timetable and work program. A lively discussion ensued over a groundrule stating the intent to reach full consensus. Was it really possible, PASC members asked, to reach 100% agreement on such contentious issues? We assured them that it was, and gave several examples of public policy dialogues where this goal had been accomplished.

Some participants asked "Why spent time on procedures; let's get on with the work", but we resisted the urge to shelve a discussion of each groundrule. This was a key decision, as the discussion required PASC members to examine their motivations for attending so many meetings to seek an agreement. We proposed two other groundrules to spur the progress of the dialogue: "Absence equals assent" and "Silence equals assent". While ultimately eliminating this language, all parties took the the LEAP project more seriously.as a result of the discussion.

The groundrules had a more powerful, positive impact than we anticipated. They motivated the group to recast its identity from a collection of disparate individuals to a cohesive gathering with a common purpose. The groundrules alleviated fears some members had about being coopted by a collaborative process, and enabled people to see that a different kind of policy making was possible.

Creating Step-Wise Agreements: Since the dialogue had been underway for nine months but not not yielded consensus on any significant point, we proposed a simple idea: each meeting should produce at least one agreement. The groundrules introduced at the first meeting were ratified by all participants at the second meeting.

We also introduced another powerful idea: the policies and rankings of the PASC should be developed using a single negotiating text. That is, instead of developing competing versions of facts and recommendations, participants should work to hammer out language in a single text that they could all support. We also suggested, based on our prior professional experience and research, that participants may want to ratify the document with their signature in order to deliver a final, tangible agreement.

This single text approach was tested at the next meeting, which was devoted to a discussion of a Vision Statement, a set of environmental goals. A seven-member subcommittee had presented a draft version of the document which reflected the ideas of several PASC members. Still there were numerous comments, as each interest group tried to introduce their

own "spin" on the statement of environmental goals. After 90 minutes of discussion, we had secured agreement on about 2 pages of a 10-page document--about the pace we had expected.

However, the task of struggling with the language produced two important lessons. First, it gave everyone experience in working in a collaborative mode to revise and improve a single text. Second, the experience persuaded the full group that they should delegate more work to the Subcommittee, but with specific instructions.

These instructions, which we proposed for the PASC's consideration, had three elements. First, a specific deadline was set for comment on the draft vision statement. All comments were to be in writing on the draft to edit specific passages of text. Second, the Subcommittee would report back to the full PASC at the next meeting, and recommend precise language for the Vision Statement. Third, the PASC would review and ratify the Vision Statement at the next meeting.

This strategy succeeded. Members of the Subcommittee, drawn from diverse interest groups, described how they had volunteered 100 hours of time to sort through the various comments. The PASC unanimously endorsed the revised Vision Statement, and demonstrated that the group could agree on a very contentious issue.

The Toxic Emissions Amendment: After the full PASC adopted the Subcommittee's version of the Vision Statement, the room erupted in applause. But the elation was short-lived, as an unanticipated detour almost derailed the dialogue. A DEQ staffer explained that a representative of a Baton Rouge citizens' group, one of few African-Americans on the PASC, wanted stronger language regarding emissions from chemical facilities. Although she could not attend the day's meeting due to a teaching obligation, she wanted the group to consider an amendment setting a goal of zero discharge of cancer-causing emissions by the Year 2000. The Subcommittee, which had successfully weighed every other proposed comment, had reached a stalemate on the amendment, and agreed that the full PASC should take up the question.

A loud debate followed. Industry representatives claimed that the group's new-found trust had evaporated. In fact, the proponent of the amendment never expected the idea to be taken seriously, she just wanted it raised to ensure that the views of her constituents were fully represented. But a half-dozen environmental and community activists picked up the banner. We did a straw vote that showed that the amendment had the support of a narrow majority of PASC members--not nearly good enough for the consensus goal we had set.

We huddled at the front of the room, and agreed that we needed to take an aggressive stand--both to preserve the consensus on the Vision Statement and to set a positive precedent for later decisions. Both sides had valid points. One of us walked to the center of the room, asked for quiet, and implored the parties to consider whether the progress we have achieved was worth jeopardizing over a few lines of text. Then, we distilled the noisy comments down to three simple principles: the vision statement should be inclusive of all Louisiana citizens; it should be based on scientifically valid concepts, and should maintain the consensus of the group. Then, we assigned representatives from industry and the environmental community to caucus over lunch and come up with a synthesis statement to incorporate these principles.

After lunch, the parties still had two conflicting statements. We posted the two statements on a flipchart, rearranged some words, and asked if the revised statement was acceptable. Once again, a straw vote showed a split, although the new language had picked up support. We revised the text was again and we repeated our question about the value of a few lines versus the entire Vision Statement. This time, conciliatory members of both the industry and the environment caucus voiced support, and the Vision Statement was adopted with two abstentions. In fact, the language finally adopted by the group addressed the concerns of the

minority community in a more far-reaching manner than either the original text or the amendment that had been proposed earlier.

The Toxic Emissions Amendment

The health of persons living adjacent to chemical facilities is fully protected from noxious, health-threatening, or cancer-causing emissions.

After the meeting, one of the DEQ staff observed that we had been "navigating white water" in handling the amendment. Indeed, we learned some important lessons. We needed to spend time preparing strategy with LEAP staff to avoid future miscommunication; we needed to assume more ownership of the process, making the transition from facilitators to mediators; and we needed to take extreme care to repair the rift that had opened between the parties.

Giving the Project a Louisiana Signature: Another challenge we faced was working with the LEAP staff give the project an appropriate Louisiana "signature". In this regard, we worked with staff to design later stages of the project even as we were still finalizing the Vision Statement and working up to the ranking of issues.

While the experience of EPA's Science Advisory Board in ranking risks held useful lessons for a technical ranking, it was clear that the Louisiana project would include a public phase of risk ranking, and a risk communication element.

In early 1991, the team of DEQ staff and facilitators made several key decisions. First, we agreed that we would rely on local scientific expertise. and not "second guess" the work of the Technical Committee by comparing it with EPA's in-house review of risks for the region. Second, we agreed that we should preserve the risk-based ranking. That is, the ranking of issues would reflect data on the effects of risks to environmental, human health, and economic data; it would not include risk management factors such as availability or cost of technology. In this way, the severity of real issues would be fairly portrayed.

Third, we agreed to carry the risk ranking strategy forward from the PASC into a series of public meetings, to kicked off by a statewide Environmental Summit on Earth Day. In this way, there would be two-way communication between PASC members and the public. Members of the public would learn about the PASC's deliberations, but also have an opportunity to record their own views of important local risks, along with possible solutions.

Bridging Technical Analysis and Policy Setting by the PASC: To ensure a strong linkage between scientific analysis and the policy deliberations of the PASC, It was essential to earn the buy in of the PASC for the work of the TC. This was accomplished in three steps.

At the January and March, 1991 meetings, members of the three working groups gave initial briefings about their work. Next, prior to the ranking retreat, a comprehensive briefing book was prepared that summarized the work of the Technical Committee. We used a combination of simple diagrams and text to recap the work of the three work groups, in a step-by-step. Three members of the TC, William Delmar of the Department of Natural Resources and Alice Fredlund and Denise Klimas of DEQ were especially helpful in presenting their first-hand experience as TC members.

Then, to make a bridge between the Technical Committee's work and their own combined ranking, the PASC adopted the following statement at the outset of the combined ranking process:

"As preparation for our own ranking of issues, the Public Advisory and Steering Committees have reviewed the work of the Technical Committee. Specifically, we have been briefed on the approach used, factors and assumptions considered, and the resulting rankings. We agree to use the Technical Committee's work as a framework for developing our rankings."

The PASC also took steps to deal wisely with technical uncertainty. The PASC acknowledged that some important data gaps existed in their assessment of the issues, but emphasized that environmental policy decisions must be made in the absence of complete information. The PASC noted that in a few cases, uncertainty had caused some issues to be ranked lower than an issue with more complete information, and urged that future data collection and analysis be completed to allow more confidence to be associated with future rankings of risk.

A Confidential Voting Process and Weighting Input of Statewide Participants:

After the TC's three work groups had ranked the thirty-three environmental issues, we combined the results into a provisional aggregate ranking. To help maintain the integrity of the exhaustive work by the TC we proposed specific groundrules to guide the PASC voting process, presented at the start of a two-day ranking retreat. We set a timeline to complete the ranking and devised a confidential voting process to enable each participant to express his or her respective preference. Each PASC member was allocated 15 votes, symbolized by blue paper dots. Votes would be conducted simultaneously for each issue, with parties placing 0 to 4 dots in an envelope labeled with that issue. Then, we would tally the votes. A sequence of voting, discussion, and summary of results was established.

Some PASC members, skeptical that the procedure would capture their preference, resisted voting at all. We responded that it would take days of discussion to arrive at a rank-ordered list. Others wanted 25 or 50 votes to spread across the 31 issues. DNR scientist Bill Delmar, who had ranked issues for the TC's ecosystems work group, urged PASC members to "defer to the experts; I believe this procedure will work." With that advice, PASC members adopted groundrules for the voting procedure.

One additional concern remained: that some groups would vote as a strategic block, and that other less organized interests would not. We suggested that each interest group caucus in advance of the vote to discuss their strategy. The next morning, just before the vote, Joyce Morningstar, a representative of industry, explained that she caucused with her colleagues. Industry, she explained, had come to conclusion that they supported the purposes of the project. She concluded, with tears in her eyes, that "everyone should vote their conscience." The room erupted with applause and the vote went on as planned.

The voting procedure worked as we had hoped. After we completed the numerical tally, the issues fell into three logical clusters. Participants agreed to label the clusters as "Highest Statewide Concern", "High Statewide Concern" or "Issue of Localized Risk or Continuing Concern". PASC members agreed that the ranked list would be released to the public as a provisional ranking.

In April, 1991, DEQ convened a Statewide Environmental Summit to kick off a series of eleven town meetings. There was a need to empower the public to contribute to the Project without derailing the continuity achieved by the provisional ranking. One concern was that citizens should be given an opportunity to add issues to the list.

The decision was made to create a ballot for a public ranking of issues, listing issues in the same order as the PASC Provisional Ranking. This kept the continuity of the overall ranking process intact. In August, 1991, after the results of Summit and town meetings were

tallied, it was clear that while there were strong similarities to the PASC ranking, a few new issues had been added, and a few issues varied in the attention they received. We prepared alternative weightings of the ranks. PASC members agreed to repeat the confidential voting procedure used at the ranking retreat, this time factoring in the results of the Summit and Town Meetings. In fact, differences were slight: air toxics, coastal wetland loss, and industrial wastewater discharge were ranked as top priorities across the board.

Ratification to Bring the Project to Closure: The LEAP project was the first comparative risk project in the country to produce a signed consensus agreement. While the adopted groundrules called for a ratification step in order to facilitate implementation of the informal agreement, we were unsure how successful we would be. In fact, we used the ratification at two stages: once for the provisional ranking, and again for the final document, completed in November.

Upon seeing the momentum generated at the March ranking retreat, we decided to ask participants to sign the document. Within two weeks, all but four organizations had returned signed documents. Three chemical industry representatives needed more time to consult internally; one state agency director harbored a difference of opinion about DEQ's turf. Nevertheless, the juxtaposition of over 40 signatures of chemical and oil industry representatives, environmentalists, labor and tenant activists and eleven agency directors was clearly a breakthrough.

DEQ staff released the provisional ranking at a press conference, which received wide attention throughout the state. In fact, the non-signing parties came under considerable pressure when reporters posed such questions as "What did you want DEQ to take out before you signed the document?" With that, the press effectively lent its blessing to the participatory process. It was clear that the project had taken on a life of its own.

We were even more successful in securing ratification of the final agreement in November, 1991. All active parties, including all the chemical industry representatives and all participating government agencies, signed the document. Figure 1 presents an excerpt of the ratification page of the final project report.

Ensuring Project Implementation During Political Transition: One of the greatest challenges we faced in building on the momentum of the PASC's agreement was to design a mechanism for implementation and to ensure that the project survived what could be a rough political transition. PASC members had expressed a strong desire to continue their work after the election. The agreement to ratify the final LEAP report was reached on October 17, 1991--two days before reform Governor Roemer was edged out in the primary by former Klansman David Duke and former governor Edwin Edwards.

Working with DEQ staff and the Governor's staff, we identified the mechanism of an Executive Order as a tool to promote implementation. Executive Orders have several advantages: they can be put in place by the governor, they have a fixed lifetime, and they can incorporate detailed information about both the rationale for the Order and the tasks to be accomplished. We worked with staff to draft the order, still unsure whether it would be signed.

Less than two weeks later, before the runoff, Edwin Edwards reached out to many new allies and expressed his support for continuation of the LEAP project. Edwards was elected. Based on the incoming governor's statement expressing hope that the PASC will continue to work and provide specific recommendations, Buddy Roemer signed an Executive Order on January 3, 1992, his last day in office. The Order directed the PASC to work with DEQ staff to prepare an *Action Strategies* document. The findings are to be reviewed by state departments which are to respond within 90 days. Then, the PAC in conjunction with state departments, will

select specific policy options and present the results to Governor Edwards in a *LEAP Implementation Report* by June 30, 1992.

Lessons for Other Complex Public Policy Dialogues: Each of the challenges and strategies we outlined above can hold lessons for other states' comparative risk projects and for other public policy dialogues. It is essential to have a reputation for neutrality in order to gain entry with legitimacy. Our dual expertise in environmental policy and dispute resolution was imperative, in order to provide guidance on the overall policy making process, and to translate technical information for lay participants.

We consciously treated all parties in an even-handed fashion, and did not let our own personal values enter the dialogue. When industry threatened to leave the dialogue in opposing the toxics amendment, we urged them to stay, which they did. When environmentalists sought to impose dire-sounding classifications of risk and were obstructing the process, we asked them to reconsider, which they did.

We spent far more time than allocated at the onset of the project in reviewing progress with LEAP staff, and ensuring that each step built on the foundation of prior progress. At each meeting, at least one agreement was reached or one document was reviewed and ratified.

Perhaps the most important lesson from LEAP is realizing the possibility that collaborative dialogue can effect personal and professional transformation. Stakeholders, previously at odds in the legislature, found themselves capable of peacemaking and cooperation. Staff found an alternative form of policy making that works. We confirmed that the rigors of our training at MIT and our association with the Harvard Program on Negotiation prepared us for the challenges of mediating a complex public policy dialogue--an environmental treaty negotiation, really--in the most demanding of states.

Bipartisan Support for Mediated Agreement

**Outgoing Governor Roemer and
Governor-Elect Edwin Edwards Declare Support
for LEAP to 2000 Project**

Louisiana has a long history of contentious partisan politics, yet both outgoing Republican Governor Buddy Roemer and his successful opponent Edwin Edwards, a Democrat, declared their support for the LEAP to 2000 Project and its final report.

After the state's open primary, in which David Duke and Edwin Edwards edged Governor Roemer, an ad hoc coalition of Louisiana environmental groups organized a questionnaire to rate the candidates. Among the 10 questions posed was this one:

"Would you retain the multi-state agency LEAP to 2000 Committee, as well as its issues, rankings, and initiatives?"

Ultimately, Duke chose not to return his, but Edwards provided this response:

"I believe one of the most important characteristics (of) the LEAP to 2000 committee was that it ... included representatives from not only state agencies, but environmental groups, the business community, academia, federal agencies, and citizens who participated in town meetings held throughout the state."

His response continued:

*"[T]he LEAP to 2000 participants have provided an important guideline for the state in establishing our environmental priorities and the allocation of resources for addressing those risks. **I hope that the committee will continue their work, and provide recommendations so that we may better use our limited fiscal resources to protect and clean our precious natural resources. (emphasis added)**"*

Bipartisan Support for Mediated Agreement (cont.)

Based on this preliminary show of support from Edwards, Buddy Roemer signed an Executive Order on January 3, 1992, his last day in office, to extend the life of the LEAP project through June 30, 1992.

After Edwards won the election, he appointed a transition team to evaluate the purpose, operations, and activities of DEQ. According to a DEQ press release, "*The transition team recommended continuation of the Louisiana Environmental Action Plan (LEAP) to 2000 and encouraged participation of interested citizens and groups in the policy development process.*"

Under the terms Roemer's Executive Order, the Public Advisory and Steering Committee is to work with DEQ staff to prepare an *Action Strategies* document, and present the findings for review to state departments. Then, the PAC in conjunction with state departments, will select specific policy options and present the results to Governor Edwards in a *LEAP Implementation Report* by June 30, 1992. The Executive Order also directs state departments under the direct authority of the Governor to respond to the Action Strategies document within 90 days, and invites three other state agencies to participate. The Executive Order also empowers the PAC to schedule public meetings, to obtain testimony from all involved parties, and to hold meetings with the heads of state departments.

Copies of LEAP Reports Available

Readers interested in obtaining a copy of the *LEAP Project Report* may correspond with the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, P.O. Box 82263, Baton Rouge, LA 70884-2263. The telephone is (504) 765-0720. Also available is a *Technical Supplement* which explain the Project's, structure and methods in detail.

How to Reach CONCUR Principals

CONCUR is a California-based firm that offers services in mediation and facilitation of public policy dialogues, conflict management, environmental policy, natural resource planning, and negotiation training. For more information on how to structure a dialogue for complex public policy issues and develop an implementation strategy, contact CONCUR Principals. Scott McCreary's address is 1832 Second Street, Berkeley, CA 94710. Scott's phone is (510) 649-8008 his fax is (510) 649-1980. John Gamman can be reached at 510 Cedar St., Suite B, Santa Cruz, CA 95060. John's phone is (831) 457-1397, his fax is (831) 457-8610.