

# ULL Students Cleanup of Woodlands Trails

Dr. Barbara Benson of University of Louisiana Lafayette and her students in Naturalist and Docent Practices have again volunteered their services to Woodlands Trail and Park for the Spring Semester. During the previous spring semester, students received some real "hand-on" experience utilizing GPS equipment to locate the trail system that was essentially indiscernible following Hurricane Katrina.

Benson's class assisted the Woodlands Trail and Park effort move their vision forward by conducting some site assessments. Katie Brasted of Woodlands Trail and Park visited the class at ULL last month to provide an overview of the Woodlands Trail and Park effort and aerial and property maps with the students. Under the direction of Benson, the students spent two weekends at the Woodlands Trail and Park site in Belle Chasse to conduct a site assessment for parking areas and entrance area amenities.

Woodlands Trail and Park is one of two sites for which an Interpretive Center was recommended in the study conducted for America's Wetland Birding Trail.

In addition to providing a site for educational information on wetland habitat and wildlife, the center would also allow a location to house artifacts and information about local cultural and military history.

As land has not been acquired for the center, the ULL students evaluated potential sites in Belle Chasse near Woodlands Trail and a potential site in Lower Coast Algiers.

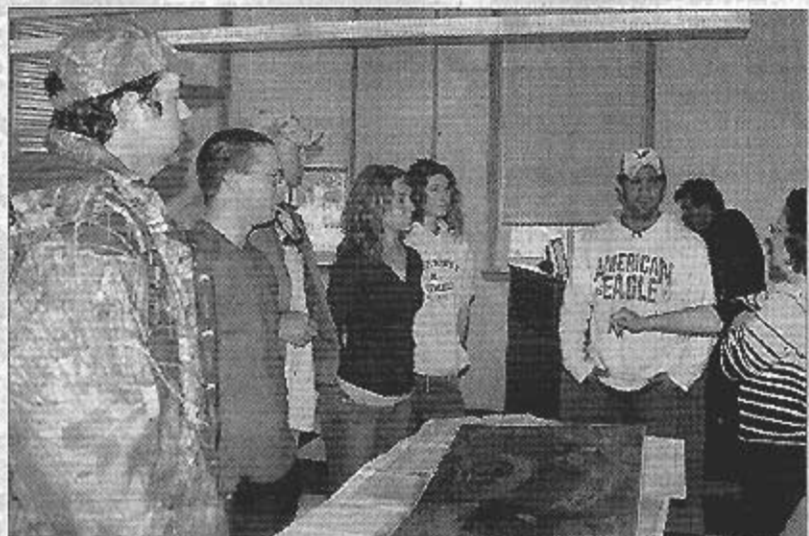
Students used GPS equipment on loan from Navigation Electronics Incorporated to assist in layout of potential amenities for Woodlands Trail and Park. Students have also received hands-on experience in identifying wetland areas by characteristics of vegetation and in turn use this data to feed into information about the potential interpretive center sites and other Woodlands Trail and Park amenities.



*Dr. Barbara Benson and University of Louisiana Lafayette students in Naturalist and Docent Practices pause for a picture along the Intracoastal Canal in Lower Coast Algiers after a weekend of conducting site assessments for potential amenities along Woodlands Trail – America's Wetland Birding Trail.*



*Dr. Barbara Benson holds the tape measure in place for marking boundaries of a Potential Interpretive Center for Woodlands while her students record GPS coordinates to transfer to maps the students will prepare for Woodlands Trail and Park.*



*Katie Brasted of Woodlands Trail and Park visited the class at the University of Louisiana Lafayette last month to provide an overview of the Woodlands Trail and Park effort and aerial and property maps with the students. Under the direction of Dr. Barbara Benson (right), the students spent two weekends at the Woodlands Trail and Park site in Belle Chasse this semester to conduct a site assessment for parking areas and entrance area amenities.*



*While taking a "break" from work along Woodlands Trail, University of Louisiana Lafayette students decide to restore the flow of water from a drainage ditch near the Woodlands Trail entrance. After removing massive storm debris which restored drainage into Planter's Canal, the water line on nearby trees dropped 15 inches.*