Three local women tackle environmental issues

By Hope Rurik

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Three local women featured in a book because of their work with the Southern Mutual Help Association. The two are featured in a book because of their work with the association.

Helen Vinton and Lorna Bourg traveled by helicopter to remote rural coastal areas after Hurricane Katrina to do damage assessments for the Southern Mutual Help Association's Rural Recovery Re­source work. The two were recognized for their environmental work.

Vinton was raised by cattle ranchers in Nebraska where she and her family raised and ate much of their own food. "We were poor, but we wouldn't say we were because we had good, clean water and air, and we worked hard and had fun," says Vinton. "I think the most important thing I learned from my family was to look at the heart, and if anything is wrong, it will show you that it is hard sometimes." Combined with her childcare and a college-education in Warren, Miss., that immersed her in "environmental stuff," Vinton was uniquely qualified when massive fish kills affected the state in 1986. "...it was an opportunity to say that this is something that shouldn't be happening," the essay in the book. "And I knew that because I have an agrarian background, and I knew there had to be a better choice. To do what had been done here and still do it, to a larger extent." And Vinton, through her work, found that if you can disperse particles could be used more effectively.

Vinton's book and that of Subra's has been to build rural communities across the state. She said recently that has been focusing on shrimpers and fishermen whose livelihood lies in the state's coastal areas. The two were featured in a book because of their work with the association.

Helen Vinton and Lorna Bourg are chosen at Southern Mutual Help Association. The two were featured in a book because of their work with the association.