

ONE to ONE

An Update on the Efforts of the LA 1 Coalition

Spring 2002

www.LA1Coalition.org • e-mail: info@LA1Coalition.org

It All Starts with a Plan

Coalition Pushes for LA 1 Inclusion in Louisiana's Updated Transportation Plan

What will Louisiana's intermodal transportation system look like in the year 2030? Will an improved LA Highway 1 system from U.S. 90 to Port Fourchon be a part of our future? The answers to these questions may be a lot clearer by the end of the year as the state completes its federally-mandated update of the statewide transportation plan.

In 1996, the state DOTD compiled the first intermodal plan as required by 1991 federal ISTEA legislation. While the 2002 updated plan will focus on economic development just as the first, the current effort incorporates the help of public officials and the public in drafting the state's future transportation blueprint.

The Louisiana Investment in Infrastructure for Economic Prosperity (LIIEP) Commission was created by the state legislature in 2001 to make final decisions on the projects to be included in the revised, long-range plan, as well as oversee implementation of listed projects. The panel's 13 members include state Rep. Loulan Pitre, DOTD Secretary Kam Movassaghi, two representatives from the Governor's office, two members appointed by the Governor, legislators and DOTD officials.

Since February, the Commission and its associated advisory councils have heard presentations about proposed infrastructure projects that may be recommended for inclusion in the updated plan. LA 1 Coalition's Roy Francis and Ted Falgout had the opportunity to present the need for an improved LA 1 and the proposed improvements to a LIIEP regional advisory council in April.

"We shared with council members the impacts of offshore oil and gas activities on LA 1, the role that the highway plays in the economic vitality of the region, as

well as our proposed highway improvements. I think we made a solid argument for including the LA 1 project in the new state plan," Francis said.

Rep. Pitre, who sits on the House Transportation Committee and authored the LIIEP legislation, says the LA 1 project matches perfectly with one key goal of the updated transportation plan.

"While the 50 to 60 intermodal projects that will be listed in the 2002 plan must have positive impacts on economic development, the Commission has agreed to recognize

continued on page 2



The state's updated intermodal transportation plan could include improvements to this threatened section of LA 1.

It All Starts with a Plan (cont.)

continued from page 1

the strategic importance of our transportation system to the nation's energy supply and provide the resources necessary to support and enhance that role," Pitre explained. "LA 1 certainly fits this objective."

According to Pitre, the LIIEP Commission expects to complete the updated intermodal transportation

plan by the end of the year. And, he says, while there is no funding at this point dedicated to the projects listed, the federal government expects each state to follow its plan, and it will be up to the Commission to see that the Louisiana plan is carried out.



PROJECT UPDATES

The Check Is in the Mail

Officials of Lafourche Parish and the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources have signed a cooperative agreement allocating \$1.7 million in federal Coastal Impact Assistance Funds to the **Leeville Bridge project**. This money, combined with other state and federal funds, will provide over \$11 million needed for the preliminary engineering and design of a new Leeville Bridge, preliminary work for a new span of highway between Golden Meadow and Port Fourchon, as well as right-of-way acquisition. The CIAP funds were provided by Congress in the fall of 2000 as a means to mitigate local impacts of oil and gas activity.

According to DOTD's David Miller, the department will soon be advertising for bids on the engineering and design work. The consultant selection process follows, as well as the record of approval for the project's Environmental Impact Statement. Project work could begin by the end of this year.

Meanwhile, Back on the Homefront...

While preliminary work for a new highway proceeds, making the existing LA Highway 1 safe for drivers continues to be a priority. A request for \$7 million in federal funds for improvements aimed at **stabilizing the threatened highway** has been submitted. This road work from Golden Meadow to Port Fourchon would include raising the existing road bed, resurfacing and constructing wider shoulders. The appropriations request should be considered by the congressional Transportation Appropriations Committee sometime before the session ends in October. The designation of LA 1 as a "High Priority Corridor" may be a tremendous asset in the approval process.

Toll Study Part Two

The state DOTD has agreed to move forward with an **intermediate toll study** for the proposed new Leeville Bridge. According to Dan Broussard of DOTD's Office of Planning and Programming, consulting group Wilber Smith and Associates will use existing data to determine the percentage of bridge construction costs that could be offset by toll collection on the bridge only. Depending on the results of the toll analysis, an investment-grade study involving real-time traffic counts and traffic pattern surveys could follow.

In 1998, the Louisiana Department of Economic Development provided \$75,000 to match a \$25,000 contribution by the Greater Lafourche Port Commission for a toll study performed by Wilber Smith that included the entire proposed elevated highway between Golden Meadow and Port Fourchon.

2001 Accomplishments Touted at Membership Meeting

A year of outstanding achievements by the LA 1 Coalition was capped off February 28 as the group conducted its annual membership meeting at Edison Chouest Offshore. Chairman Ted Falgout and Executive Director Roy Francis touted the group's hard-fought accomplishments, namely High Priority Corridor designation for LA 1 and over \$8 million in state and federal funds received for preliminary engineering and design of a new bridge and elevated highway.

As always, the LA 1 Coalition extends its gratitude to Edison Chouest for hosting the meeting, and to all of our members for their continued support of our efforts to build a better LA 1.



*In the last issue of "One to One," a photo of a boat colliding with the Leeville Bridge was provided by Josh Lott of NOAA.
Thanks!*

Chairman's Report

-by Ted Falgout, Executive Director, Greater Lafourche Port Commission



In our last newsletter, I made the analogy of our project being like a big fish that hopefully, we have the skills to land successfully. Well, I'm happy to report that it looks like we've found a tackle box with even more equipment, and confidence is building that we WILL land this trophy fish.

Over the past few months, Roy and I have made two trips to Washington, D.C. that have yielded great results, and we have had the pleasure of hosting congressional staffers for a tour of the port. Recognition and strong support continue to build. We have clearly made our case and obtained support from the Associate Director of Offshore Activities, the Deputy Director and the Director of MMS. We have additionally explained our plight to the Energy Department, Federal Transportation Department, Maritime Administration and American Petroleum Institute.

As the popular advertisement claims, "We've Come A Long Way, Baby!" Just five years ago, Port Fourchon was not even cited in the Environmental Impact Statement for the MMS' five-year leasing program. Today, the port is now the most widely recognized focal point of impact in the new five-year E.I.S. Our efforts are currently focused on taking these now well-documented impacts beyond documentation and including them in a policy addressing these impacts.

"We've Come a Long Way, Baby!"

Meanwhile, our congressional delegation is fully engaged and working together in support of offshore revenue sharing. Now that the federal energy bill has passed both chambers, it must go to conference committee where committee members will try to make one bill out of the two widely different versions. Senator Mary Landrieu has included language in the Senate version that would provide

"Our efforts are currently focused on taking these now well-documented impacts beyond documentation and including them in a policy addressing these impacts."

money for impact assistance. This was a huge achievement and her actions need to be recognized. Congressman Billy Tauzin will chair

the extremely important conference committee. He understands our energy infrastructure problem and has pledged his assistance. It would be of great help if Coalition members and residents of our area send our Senator and Congressman a note thanking them for their assistance and reminding them how important LA 1 is to this nation.

Finally, the dedicated efforts of British Petroleum (BP) should be recognized. They clearly recognize the importance of our cause and have committed their local and Washington resources to furthering our effort.

These are truly exciting times for our cause and the "big fish" is perhaps closer than we think. It just might fit in our boat after all!



This spring, Coalition Chairman Ted Falgout and Director Roy Francis hosted Congressional staffers and BP representatives on a tour of Port Fourchon.

LA 1 COALITION
P.O. Box 2048-NSU
Thibodaux, LA 70310

PRSR. STD.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BATON ROUGE, LA
PERMIT NO. 213

CONTRIBUTORS TO THE COALITION
As of April 30, 2002

ANS Engines, Inc.
Bank One
Barriere Construction Co.
Bilco Tools, Inc.
Bayou Civic Club
Bayou Supply & Chemical, Inc.
Bollinger Shipyards, Inc.
Breux Petroleum Products, Inc.
Buckner Rental Service, Inc.
C & G Boats, Inc.
Caillouet Land Corporation
Cajun Trucking, Inc.
Callais Boat Company
CanDo, Inc.
Constantin Land Trust
Coastal Environments, Inc.
Crosby Tugs, Inc.
Danos & Curole, Inc.
Deepwater Port Services, Inc.
Delta Testing & Inspection, Inc.
Deramee & Pitre, LLP
Doucet & Adams, Inc.
E S & H Consulting Services, Inc.
Edison Chouest Offshore, LLC
Edward Wisner Donation Advisory Cmte.
Entergy Louisiana

Francis Drilling Fluids, Ltd.
G&A Barge Rental & Construction, Inc.
Gilbert Ceramie Boats, Inc.
Golden Lane Marine, Inc.
Grand Isle Port Commission
Grand Isle Shipyard, Inc.
Greater Lafourche Port Commission
Hibernia National Bank
Houma Armature Works & Supply, Inc.
John W. Stone Oil Dist., Inc.
J. Wayne Plaisance, Inc.
L&L Oil Company, Inc.
L & M Botruc Rentals, Inc.
Lady of the Sea General Hospital
Lafourche Parish Council
Landry House Bed and Breakfast
Larry Griffin Towing
Larry Picciola, Inc.
Legislative Support Group
Leonard Miller Insurance
Louisiana Machinery Co.
Louisiana Offshore Oil Port, LLC
Lower Lafourche Development, LLC
Magnum Mud Equipment Co., Inc.
Martin Terminal, Inc.
Mid Continent Oil & Gas Association
M.I. Drilling Fluids
Morgan City Rentals
Morris P. Hebert, Inc.

Orgeron Properties, Inc.
Ocean Marine Operators, LLC
Picciola & Associates, Inc.
Pointe Fourchon, Inc.
Regions Bank
Ronald Adams Contractor, Inc.
Rousse Marine, Inc.
SJI, Inc.
Southern Scrap Recycling, LLC
Southern Guard
South Lafourche Bank & Trust
South Lafourche Levee District
State Bank & Trust Company
Suard Barge Service, Inc.
Superior Shipyard Fabrications, Inc.
Sureway Supermarket, Inc.
T. Baker Smith & Son, Inc.
Terrebonne Motor Co., Inc.
Tetra Oil & Gas Services, Inc.
Theriot, Duet & Theriot, Inc.
Valentine Sugars, Inc.
Venture Transport, Inc.

THANK YOU!

***DOTD Secretary Lauds LA 1 Efforts at
Chamber Lafourche Banquet***

The importance of LA 1 to the state and the nation was a key message of DOTD Secretary Kam Movassaghi at the Chamber Lafourche's quarterly breakfast on March 6. In his speech on the state's long-term transportation plan, Movassaghi cited the LA 1 project as key to the state's future, and had a word of praise for the efforts of the LA 1 Coalition to secure support and funding for the project. The LA 1 Coalition was a sponsor of the meeting.

For Your Information...

If you would like to receive additional copies of "One to One" or more information on the LA 1 Coalition, call Roy Francis, Executive Director, at (985) 448-4485 or write to us at P.O. Box 2048-NSU, Thibodaux, LA 70310. Our office is located on the campus of Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, LA, within the offices of the South Louisiana Economic Council. The LA 1 Coalition is a non-profit 501(c4) corporation. Editor: Jennifer Armand