

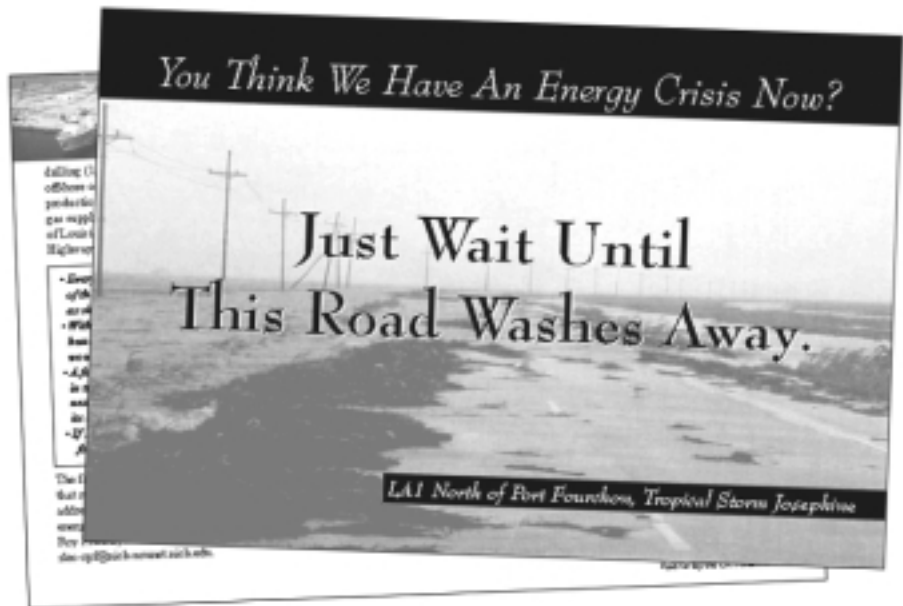
ONE to ONE

An Update on the Efforts of the LA 1 Coalition

Summer 2001

Coalition Targets Congress With Direct Plea for Highway Funds

The La 1 Coalition is preparing to kick off a new public awareness campaign aimed directly at congressmen and news media throughout the country. The campaign's message centers around the importance of LA 1 to the national energy supply and the pressing need for infrastructure improvements. Highway money from a new national energy policy is the goal.



For nearly five years now, the LA 1 Coalition has worked to inform local, state and federal officials about the dire condition of the southernmost portion of the highway in an effort to secure enough money for highway improvements. And the LA 1 issue has successfully become a part of the local and national political landscapes.

This fall, the LA 1 Coalition

unveils another strategy in its battle for highway funds—a direct plea to U.S. Congressmen and Senators and reporters throughout the country. It's the first full-scale, integrated public relations push for the Coalition and a big step in spreading the message of the highway's importance to the national energy supply.

“Headlines about high gasoline prices and electrical blackouts have dominated our news this summer. Couple this with the fact that Congress is now debating

energy policy legislation, and we think it's the perfect time to launch a public relations campaign focused on the role Louisiana plays in offshore energy production and the impacts on LA 1,” says Coalition Executive Director Roy Francis.

The campaign will feature a set of four professionally designed postcards to be sent to Congress as well as state and local elected officials, listing facts about the Louisiana coast's role in

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The FACTS Are Clear: A National Energy Policy Must Address Critical Paths Like LA 1

Federal waters off the Louisiana coast provide **19 percent** of the nation's total natural gas production and **19 percent** of all of the crude oil produced in the U.S.

Port Fourchon is the one land base that supports the **overwhelming majority of deepwater oil and gas production** in the Gulf of Mexico.

The **only road** connecting Port Fourchon to the rest of Louisiana and the nation is **LA Highway 1**, a fragile two-lane highway prone to be impassable in the event of rising flood waters.

Every day, nearly **1,000 big trucks** travel down a 30-mile section of the substandard two-lane highway, making it twice as deadly as similar highways.

Without **LA 1**, access for equipment and support personnel to the hundreds of platforms producing **19 percent** of this nation's oil and gas would be severely hampered.

A federal study projects an **80 percent increase** in truck traffic on the southernmost section of LA 1 over the next decade, further straining the highway and its accessibility.

Louisiana's coast provided more than **\$3.3 billion** in oil royalty revenue last year, **74 percent** of the total collected nationwide, and yet received only **\$22 million** in return to mitigate impacts.

Bond Commission Set to Hear Capital Outlay Request for Leeville Bridge

The 2001 Louisiana Legislative Session breathed new life into the Leeville Bridge project when legislators approved nearly \$5 million in capital outlay funds for engineering and design of a new bridge.

And, according to state Sen. Reggie Dupre, the State Bond Commission could authorize the sale of bonds or a non-cash line of credit as early as its meeting on September 21. "The fact that we have \$2.2 million in TEA-21 funds and \$1.7 million in CIAP funds that can be used as a match will be a great advantage to getting authorization for the Leeville Bridge project," Dupre says.

If the bond sale or line of credit is approved, engineering and design work could begin early next year.

Coalition Targets Congress (cont.)



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offshore energy production, related traffic through Port Fourchon and LA 1, and the need for impact mitigation funds. A new web site for the LA 1 Coalition will be launched, and fact sheets, news

releases and sets of the postcards will be included in a media packet to be sent to major newspapers and television stations throughout the country.

"Demonstrating to reporters and ultimately voters from the north-east, midwest and the west coast just how expensive electricity and gasoline might be without the contributions of South Louisiana should help strengthen our fight for federal highway improvement funds," explains Rep. Loulan Pitre.

As Coalition Chairman Ted

Falgout points out, the campaign's call to action accurately sums up the group's five-year effort. "A national energy policy must address primary routes like LA 1 or we will experience an energy crisis of disastrous proportions," he says.

The postcard campaign is scheduled to begin in September, following Congress' return from the Labor Day break. The media push will follow.



Chairman's Report

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



Taking Advantage of A Once-In-A-Lifetime Opportunity

These truly are exciting and challenging times. Never before has this nation been so keenly aware of the energy it consumes. A year ago, few would have imagined that Congress would be considering energy policy legislation, much less passing it. Well, the House has passed H.R. 4, the Securing America's Future Energy Act of 2001.

This fervor over energy has presented us with what could amount to a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to gain national recognition of our contribution to the country's energy supply. It could even lay the foundation for a mechanism to mitigate the impacts to our highways and waterways that we are experiencing because of this federal offshore leasing program.

Getting our due recognition and the dollars to fix the problem is no easy task. It will take hard work and dedication from our Congressional delegation, leadership from state government and a grass roots effort of local support. Shame on Louisiana if we let this window of opportunity close without getting this state its fair compensation for our extraordinary effort in accommodating this country's energy needs.

In an effort to let the federal government know that they have underestimated the impacts of energy development on communities such as ours, the Port Commission has taken a leadership role. Following is an excerpt of my written comments sent to the MMS Gulf of Mexico OCS Region on June 13. Letters supporting our position were also sent by the governor, legislators, LA 1 Coalition, Chamber of Commerce, senior citizens and many others.

"... It has been almost four years to date since the EIS on GOM OCS Oil and Gas Lease Sales 169, 172, 175, 178 and 182 has been prepared. Mainly as a result of public testimony, that EIS did recognize that focal point

areas such as Port Fourchon would experience significant impacts upon its infrastructure due to increases in deepwater activity over the short term.

Over the past four years, we have witnessed that the anticipated impacts on infrastructure such as LA Highway 1 and the parish's water supply have not been accurately assessed. The role of Port Fourchon as the key land base for intermodal support of OCS activity and the resulting impacts have been greatly underestimated.

Industry representatives tell us that 40 out of the 45 deepwater rigs working in the Gulf of Mexico today are being serviced out of Port Fourchon. This is in addition to the huge amount of shelf activity. Highway and inland waterway traffic has increased far beyond expectation, and major improvements to the parish's water system have not eased the strain.

"We ask that you take a hard look at what is happening to Lafourche Parish as a direct result of OCS activities and its national significance to this country's energy supply."

Efforts to have the Federal Government mitigate these well-documented impacts have failed, and yet we proceed to compound these impacts with additional Lease Sales. When long-time friends of energy production are treated in this manner, it becomes very clear why other states refuse to allow oil and gas activity off their coasts.

We ask that you take a hard look at what is happening to Lafourche Parish as a direct result of OCS activities and its national significance to this country's energy supply. We also ask that you consider the vast discoveries and their impacts that were not known when the EIS was conducted.

... We appreciate the support

MMS has given toward achieving impact assistance and encourage you to elevate this effort. This perhaps can be best accomplished by conducting an accurate assessment of the impacts that are present, documenting the extreme significance of the Lafourche Corridor to our offshore energy production, and assuming a more aggressive role in getting these impacts mitigated.

The existing EIS has not properly measured the impacts of the five-year program, especially on Port Fourchon and Lafourche Parish. The lack of an energy policy that would mitigate these impacts has further strained the system and amplified the predicted impacts. This must be documented and hopefully corrected before we experience a total collapse and find ourselves in an energy crisis never before witnessed in this country.

In closing, I want to make it very clear that Port Fourchon and Lafourche Parish are experiencing new and significant impacts far beyond the levels documented in the five-year EIS. This commission feels that, as a direct result of the inaction on the federal government's part to properly mitigate the impacts identified in the EIS and subsequent MMS documents, greater than anticipated strain to our infrastructure has resulted.

As we evaluate our position on the next Central Gulf lease sale, we will closely track the government's effort to mitigate the afore-mentioned impacts on such a nationally strategic focal point."



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***\$1.7 Million in Impact Assistance
Funds Earmarked for Leeville Bridge***

Thanks to the efforts of Rep. Loulan Pitre and Sen. Reggie Dupre, and the support of the LA 1 Coalition and Lafourche parish officials, the parish will receive nearly \$1.7 million from the federal Coastal Impact Assistance Program to begin engineering and design work for a new Leeville Bridge. In May, Pitre and Dupre sent a letter to Governor Foster requesting that the state earmark \$1.3 million from its share of 2001 CIAP funds for the project, in addition to the \$338,647 already targeted for Lafourche Parish as part of the coastal zone. The funding request was included in the state's plan for spending the federal funds and the Department of Natural Resources is now awaiting final approval from Washington.

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 (504) 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