

COAST BUILDERS COALITION

JUNE 2010

NEWSLETTER



STATE LEGISLATIVE SESSION ENDS

The state legislative session ended on June 21. Unfortunately, there was no opportunity to fight for state funds for the coast. The state was facing a considerable deficit and there were no proposals to provide additional state dollars for restoration and protection efforts.

There were some legislative battles on coastal related matters. There were several bills to limit the power of the state and levee districts to take property. This is a sensitive issue for coastal interests given the importance of efficiently and effectively “using” property for restoration and protection projects. The most contentious battle on this matter came on HB 1324 by Rep. Cedric Richmond. The bill would have removed the six foot servitude at a levee toe, a servitude that has been in place in Louisiana for over a hundred years. By removing the servitude, the bill threatened to drive up levee construction and levee maintenance costs. The Coast Builders Coalition was able to join the Governor’s Office in removing this provision of the bill.

Another battle occurred over

an effort to allow levee districts to perform any project with a value below \$2 million in-house. This was a sharp departure from the current cap of \$150,000. The Coast Builders Coalition worked with the Associated Builders and Contractors and the Associated General Contractors to scale back this legislation so that it only allowed a \$1 million project cap for levee districts for four years.

In response to a controversial highway design-build project in the Baton Rouge area, Senator Claitor introduced a bill to ban the use of the design-build method. This legislation removed the legal provision allowing OCPR to contract using the design-build method. This legislation was also defeated.

Successful legislation included a bill to allow for the formation of a coastal science consortium, a bill to form the Iberia Parish Levee, Hurricane Protection and Conservation District and a bill that formed the Chenier Plain Coastal Restoration and Protection Authority.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Spotlight on GOTECH
State legislative session ends
State of Coast Summary

Highlights from June 16 CRPA Meeting
BRCC Graduating Technician

Oil Spill could be Catalyst for Next Wave of Coastal Funding
Officials Debate Future of Coast

Get to Know: GOTECH, Inc. Consulting Engineers

GOTECH, Inc., a professional engineering and consulting firm, was established in 1981 by Rhaoul A. Guillaume, Sr., President. Built beneath a stately, majestic oak tree on Bluebonnet Boulevard in Baton Rouge, Louisiana GOTECH demonstrates steady development and progress rooted in a foundation of skill and continuing education.

GOTECH provides its clients quality consulting engineering services that include all aspects of civil design and surveying, along with experience in inspection, construction management, and program management. The staff is equipped with vast knowledge, long-standing industry expertise and prides itself on performing work in a highly professional and timely manner. GOTECH, Inc. is fully capable of performing as a prime or sub consultant role, and GOTECH priorities remain the same - quality of work, cost control, compliance to standards, along with meeting performance schedules. GOTECH business relationships



prosper because of the synergy established between the clients and our engineering professionals. GOTECH staff works with our clients and their consultants in the spirit of true collaboration to complete each and every project. The value of a loyal and satisfied customer is our business.

GOTECH is a proud member of The Coast Builders Coalition and is committed to serve the State of Louisiana and its invaluable coastline.



GOTECH, Inc.: Engineers dedicated to growth through technical excellence.



Highlights from June 16 CPRA Meeting

Oil Spill Update- Garret Graves discussed the serious impacts of the spill on coastal communities and coastal habitats. He emphasized that the State is taking matters into their own hands given the hurdles put up by BP and the Feds. The State is looking to implement a multiple lines of defense plan that includes boom, sand barriers, oil cleanup, etc. All possible river diversions are running in an effort to flush out the wetlands.

Sand Barrier Proposal- Kyle Graham detailed the most most intense dredging operation the US has ever seen. Shaw is serving at the program manager and Manson,

Great Lakes and Weeks are expected to participate in the program. Kyle highlighted the basic principles of the effort were to create an oil barrier off the coast and allow the oil to get into the sand rather than the marshes. It is much easier to cleanup the sand than the marsh. While there will be some immediate benefits flowing from the plan, it will not be fully complete for another six months.

Horizon Science and Engineering Review

Team-Its purpose is to help CPRA and State throughout the oil spill response. The team is relying heavily on the university coastal research consortium. The

team has three main tasks: programmatic response, sand barrier design/build project, oil spill response technology. New Orleans Hurricane Protection System Update

Highlights

- Almost done with many of the surge barriers
- Almost all work on pump stations complete
- System is more robust than ever,
- Plan is still to fully complete system by June 2011

LCA 6 Update- The Corps gave a progress update saying they will finish the required reports on the LCA six by the end of the year.

Oil Spill Could Be Catalyst for Next Wave of Coastal Funding

While the oil spill will cause the loss of some of Louisiana wetlands, it may serve to create more wetlands than it destroys. There is a clamor from State and Federal to restore the coastline to a better state than it was before the spill. The federal Natural Resources Defense Act and Oil Spill Pollution Act require mitigation and restoration after an oil spill. However, state and federal officials are already looking to go beyond the current law and provide additional assistance for the Gulf Coast.

Senator Mary Landrieu was one of the first looking to leverage the spill when she introduced legislation to advance the start of OCS

revenue sharing from 2017 to 2011. The fiscal note on this provision suggests it would bring an additional \$100 million to Louisiana over the next six years. It is unclear whether Landrieu's proposal has enough momentum to make it all the way through the process in DC.

As an alternative, State and Federal officials are looking to BP to pay for coastal restoration. While no set plan or amount has been floated publicly, it is anticipated this issue will be a major source of discussion for the "Gulf Coast Oil Spill Recovery Czar" Navy Secretary Mabus

With BP placing \$20 billion in a fund to cover gulf coast impacts, it certainly reasonable to believe that BP could be required to provide billions in restoration dollars to Louisiana.

[Click here to see related article.](#)



Protective booms surround islands near mouth of the Mississippi River south of Venice, Louisiana from an oil spill Monday, May 17, 2010. (AP Photo/Charlie Riedel)

Baton Rouge Community College Graduating First Set of Science Technicians

Baton Rouge Community College recently graduated its first class of Associates of Applied Science Technology. The degree program allows students to choose an Environmental Technology or Engineering Technology concentration. The current class consists of five students all concentrating in Environmental Technology.

This program is significant to the coastal industry in two ways. The program was inspired by the growth in coastal work in Louisiana and the anticipated need for qualified technicians. Also, Scott Kirkpatrick was asked to chair the advisory committee for this program because the Coast Builders Coalition was seen as an important partner.

For those companies interested in this program and its graduates, there are several ways to get involved. First, the program requires its students to do an internship. Shaw has agreed to provide internships to

the first five graduates, but more companies are needed to provide internships. Second, the program is looking for companies who will provide scholarships. Finally, the five recent graduates are looking for permanent jobs in the fall. If you have an interest in any of these areas, please call Jo Dale Ales at BRCC at 225.216.8094.



Officials Debate Future of Coast at “State of Coast”

A debate over how far Louisiana coastal restoration has come since Katrina generated some interesting discussion at the State of the Coast meeting. Officials noted that there is over \$8 billion dollars in major federal restoration projects and \$2 billion in state projects in various stages of planning, but little money has actually been appropriated for these efforts. It was encouraging to see Nancy Sutley, chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality, attend the conference and discuss the need for BP to leave the coast in better shape than it was prior to the oil spill. Sutley anticipated BP would pay the largest claim ever for damage to natural resources.



funnel billions into Louisiana’s coastal ecosystem. The oil spill is certainly providing the Louisiana coast plenty of exposure. Whether the air time will translate into restoration dollars remains to be seen. For the full article click [here](#).

She highlighted the work of the Obama administration in setting forth a roadmap for restoring the Louisiana and Mississippi coasts. This roadmap was released several months ago and anticipates significant advances in coastal restoration efforts in the next 12-18 months so that a final plan for sustaining the coast can be advanced in an efficient and effective manner. The panel felt the biggest challenge for Louisiana was getting national support to

State of the Coast Summary

The State of the Coast Conference was held June 8-10, 2010 at the Baton Rouge River Center. The conference aimed to bring the latest science and engineering in regards to coastal ecosystem restoration and hurricane protection issues to the planners and decision makers across coastal Louisiana. Coast Builders Coalition participated in the event as a sponsor. CBC also had an exhibitors booth in which guests of the conference could gain knowledge of what CBC is about.

Coast Builders hosted a State of the Coast dinner

at 333 Bistreaux. There were a total of 50 guests in attendance. Speaker Jason El Koubi from Louisiana Economic Development spoke to the group and discussed the development of the water management industry in Louisiana.

