



Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority

Working to establish a safe and sustainable coast that will protect our communities, the nation's critical energy infrastructure and our bountiful natural resources for generations to come.

Louisiana's Largest Coastal Project Completed Below Port Fourchon

PORT FOURCHON, LA. (March 21, 2017) – La. Governor John Bel Edwards today unveiled the newly-completed restoration of the Caminada Headlands, a 13-mile stretch of beach and dune running from the Belle Pass outlet of Bayou Lafourche eastward to Caminada Pass at the end of Elmer's Island.

“This is the largest single ecosystem restoration the state Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority has ever undertaken, and the results are outstanding,” said Gov. Edwards. “CPRA’s restoration of this and other coastal beaches and headlands—along with the impressive rebuilding of our chain of barrier islands—sets the stage for even larger projects further inland as we restore our land and marshes that are vital to the protection of our homes, families, business, infrastructure and our very way of life.”

“The increased protection this provides to our port facility is already paying dividends,” said Chet Chiasson, executive director of the Greater Lafourche Port Commission. “Word has gotten out about the huge improvements the state has made here, and that commitment to our security is sparking serious discussions with a number of companies interested in moving to our facility or expanding their investment here. We’re talking many millions of dollars in economic development.”

An important project of Louisiana’s Coastal Master Plan, the headland restoration project cost approximately \$216 million, and was funded by the state (\$30 million in State Surplus), the federal Coastal Impact Assistance Program (\$40 million), and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation’s Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund (\$145.9 million) established in the wake of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill to manage funds resulting from the settlement of federal criminal charges against BP and Transocean.

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“The conclusion of this critical project represents an historic milestone for Louisiana and for the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF),” said Jeff Trandahl, executive director and CEO of NFWF. “Today, Caminada stands as the largest and most significant restoration project in the history of Louisiana and NFWF. The total project has re-established nearly 800 acres of critical habitat for shorebirds, such as the threatened piping plover, and other wildlife. In addition, restoration of Caminada Headlands strengthens the first line of defense against the persistent effects of coastal erosion in Louisiana. We are proud to have partnered with the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority of Louisiana to deliver this critical and sustainable project on time and on budget.”

The new beach covers an area equivalent to approximately 1,047 football fields. The 8.4 million cubic yards of sand used was dredged from an ancient Mississippi River delta out in the Gulf of Mexico below Cocodrie. It was barged 30 miles to the headland where it was used to build up 13 miles of beach to a height 4.5 feet above sea level, with a dune elevation of seven feet, and a dune crest width of 290 feet. The average depth of the beach from dune to shoreline is approximately 65 feet.

CPRA Chairman Johnny Bradberry is intimately aware of how much eroded away in just one lifetime, having grown up in the area.

“I know what we had and what we lost,” said Bradberry, “and so have many generations of people who’ve lived and visited this area over many decades. This is a great day to celebrate what has been accomplished here, but we know the urgency of doing more projects like this, and bigger projects on the coast and in our marshes. There is much more to do, and we’re doing it, but let us not forget our successes along the way—and this is a major success.”

The governor and other state and local dignitaries cut a ribbon and planted dune vegetation on the eastern portion of the project, Elmer’s Island Wildlife Refuge managed by the La. Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries.

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“This is still an active project area while CPRA continues the vegetation planting,” said LDWF Secretary Jack Montoucet. “But as this passes into our hands for management, I am committed to protecting what has been created here. I consider this one of the crown jewels of our coast, a beautiful area serving an important purpose while also providing enjoyment for our people. It must and will be maintained.”

Access to the beach is now open to foot traffic only. The dunes and dune vegetation are fragile, and are therefore off limits. The parking area is accessible only via Elmer’s Island Road off of Highway 1 on the approach to Grand Isle.

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CPRA was established as the single, centralized, State of Louisiana Authority, to consolidate state, parish and federal personnel and resources to create, coordinate and implement a Coastal Master Plan of unified vision for remediation, restoration and protection, to reduce hurricane storm surge flood impact, to restore our bountiful natural resources, to protect our nation’s critical energy infrastructure, and to secure Louisiana’s coast now and for future generations.