



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - May 7, 2009

Landrieu, Melancon Announce Plaquemines Will Receive \$6 Million from Congressional Coastal Restoration Program

Grant is for East Grand Terre Island Restoration Project

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Mary Landrieu (D-La.) and U.S. Rep. Charlie Melancon (LA-03) announced today that Plaquemines Parish will receive a \$6 million federal grant for the East Grand Terre Island Restoration Project through a program the Members worked with their congressional colleagues to create in 2005. The federal grant will build on work done with an earlier \$21 million federal grant to the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources for barrier island restoration at East Grande Terre.

“This investment in our marsh rebuilding project will help protect Plaquemines from future storm surges,” Sen. Landrieu said. “The East Grand Terre Island Restoration project is a critical component of our effort to rebuild our great coast and keep our communities safe,” Sen. Landrieu said.

“Rebuilding our coastal marshes is the foundation for creating comprehensive hurricane protection for our south Louisiana communities,” said Rep. Melancon. “Projects like the East Grand Terre Island Restoration will strengthen our natural protection against storms, reducing storm surge and flooding. This grant is another step in that direction, and we will continue fighting to bring more federal money back to Louisiana to meet our coastal restoration and hurricane protection needs.”

Sen. Landrieu and Rep. Melancon supported the creation of the Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP) as part of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. CIAP authorizes \$250 million in grants annually, from 2007-2010, to be distributed to six outercontinental shelf oil and gas producing states: Louisiana, Alabama, Alaska, California, Mississippi, and Texas. These grants are for coastal restoration and mitigation of the impacts of OCS oil and gas activities. Of the \$500 million in federal funding allocated by over the past two years (fiscal years 2007 and 2008), Louisiana has received \$255 million for coastal restoration projects.

The federal grant announced today will be used to prevent the breaching of East Grand Terre Island by building 161 acres of dune and 456 acres of marsh. This project will implement restoration measures designed and engineered to overcome the loss of habitats, both on-shore and on marine barrier islands, while preventing island breakup caused by tropical storms, high shoreline erosion rates, and lack of sand and sediment.

Plaquemines Parish President Billy Nungesser said, “This grant shows again how important marsh rebuilding projects are to the protection of not just Plaquemines Parish, but the whole region. 80 percent of storms hitting New Orleans travel through Plaquemines Parish first. Building up our coastal

wetlands creates a buffer that absorbs the bulk of the storm surge, reducing the impact on our levees and the communities they protect. I am pleased we will be turning dirt on another project to rebuild our coastal wetlands in Plaquemines Parish.”

East Grand Terre Island is located approximately 45 miles south of New Orleans in lower Plaquemines parish, northeast of Grand Isle. The project area is in the lower Barataria Basin, part of the vital barrier shoreline complex. Through this project, approximately 3.3 million cubic yards of material will be dredged from any of seven nearby permitted borrow sites. About 1.5 million cubic yards of sand will be used to create the beach and dune habitats, and 1.8 million cubic yards of silty material will be used to construct the marsh habitat on the island.