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To: Josh Manning <josh@scpsc.org>
Subject: State to Receive Grant to Complete Elevated LA 1



June 15, 2020

\$135 Million Federal Transportation Grant to be Awarded for LA 1 Improvement Project

Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards announced today that the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LA DOTD) will receive a \$135 million federal grant for construction of an 8.3-mile elevated LA Highway 1 between Leeville and Golden Meadow in Lafourche Parish. The grant is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation's (US DOT) Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) program. Construction of this critical segment of the LA 1 Improvement Project is expected to go to bid in spring 2021.

"This grant is a huge win for Louisiana and the nation," said **LA DOTD Secretary Dr. Shawn Wilson**. "Elevating this roadway has always been a priority but was not able to come to fruition due to a lack of funding. This would not have been possible without the 2019 legislation championed by Rep. Tanner Magee, Sen. Rick Ward, and Sen. Page Cortez and signed by the Governor. I am so very proud of the team that worked on this application. Advancing this infrastructure will strengthen Louisiana's economy, ensuring this region continues to be a leader in servicing the nation's oil and natural gas production."

"After months of hard work, the Trump Administration's award of \$135 million in federal INFRA funding to elevate LA Highway 1 is a major victory for our region's safety and America's energy security," said **Louisiana Congressman Steve Scalise, who represents the project area**. "Elevating LA 1 has long been a top priority of mine, and I have worked closely for years with DOT Secretary Elaine Chao, Governor Edwards, and local leaders to secure this vital funding.

"As recently as June 8, LA 1 was closed after becoming impassable due to flooding from Tropical Storm Cristobal. Along with being a hurricane evacuation route, LA 1 provides sole access to Port Fourchon and the Louisiana Offshore Oil Port (LOOP). Elevating LA 1 is not only essential for the protection of Louisiana families, but absolutely vital for achieving American energy dominance and safeguarding access to our nation's oil and natural gas supply," Scalise said. "I applaud President Trump and Secretary Chao for recognizing this importance and for providing the critical support needed for the LA 1 Project."

"The LA 1 Coalition would like to thank the leadership of Senators Cassidy and Kennedy and Congressmen Scalise and Graves for this success. A historic federal award of this size could not have been garnered without the support of our entire Congressional Delegation and their unified approach was critical to this significant grant award. Alongside Governor Edwards and LA DOTD Secretary Dr. Shawn Wilson, each member of the Congressional Delegation has demonstrated unwavering support and never hesitated to engage when asked for help. This award recognizes the region's contribution to our nation's economic needs and goal of ongoing energy dominance. We are grateful for Secretary Chao's vision and commitment to completing LA 1," said **LA 1 Coalition Executive Director Henri Boulet**.

Construction of the elevated highway is estimated at \$445 million, to be funded by an innovative public-private partnership demonstrating the significance of the LA 1 corridor to energy security, economic growth and environmental resiliency. LA DOTD and LA 1 Coalition officials consider this funding partnership to have been an advantage for the LA 1 grant request.

In addition to the \$135 million federal Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant announced today, construction funds include \$150 million from the State of Louisiana for the LA 1 Project in Act 443 of the 2019 Regular Legislative Session, \$25 million from the Greater Lafourche Port Commission, \$8.9 million from oil and gas companies and service companies, \$1.2 million each from Lafourche Parish Government and the LA 1 Coalition, and \$210,000 from local landowners. A balance of \$13.5 million dollar over the course of construction will be solicited from industry partners. While the INFRA grant award was not funded at the total requested, the project is fully funded.

"The INFRA grant award is the final piece of the funding puzzle put together by the State of Louisiana, Lafourche Parish, Greater Lafourche Port Commission, and industry stakeholders. This is an excellent example of what hard work and perseverance can accomplish, and we are proud to be a part of it. The future of our economy and community is bright with the

reliable access this elevated highway will provide,” said **Chett Chiasson, Executive Director of the Greater Lafourche Port Commission and Chairman of the LA 1 Coalition.**

LA 1 is the only highway that services Port Fourchon, which supports 17 percent of American oil and gas production and generates a \$4 billion per year economic impact on Louisiana. The highway also provides access to coastal marshes for restoration and protection projects and serves as the sole evacuation route for Port Fourchon and residents of Grand Isle and lower Lafourche Parish. With all of this activity dependent on a safe and reliable highway access, the segment of elevated highway to be built has an exceptional 4.86% benefit/cost analysis, expected to yield over \$1.5 billion in economic benefits collectively to our stakeholders and federal, state and local government entities over a 30-year period.

“This is an extraordinary day for our community, our state and the LA 1 Coalition. Now we are eager to begin construction on this critical energy infrastructure that our organization has vigorously championed for many years,” said Boulet.

“The completed elevated LA 1 will host millions of dollars of commercial activity moving in and out of Port Fourchon, Grand Isle, and our vibrant Gulf of Mexico. Whether for recreation, fishing, coastal restoration, or production of our abundant natural resources, drivers along LA 1 will have a much safer and dependable route to Louisiana’s valuable working coast,” he said.

More than 1,300 trucks and heavy vehicles travel the LA 1 southern corridor daily to support port activity and energy production. The traffic and related economic activity comes to a halt multiple days a year, however, as tidal inundation forces closure of the existing at-grade highway from Leeville to Golden Meadow. Each day that Port Fourchon is open and available for commerce but LA 1 is closed due to flooding costs the U.S. \$46 million in oil and gas production and \$528 million in GDP, according to the project’s benefit/cost ratio. On June 7, the highway was closed for 20 hours due to Tropical Storm Cristobal, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) predicts the existing at-grade LA 1 will be under water 22 days a year by 2030 and 201 days a year by 2047.

“The LA 1 Coalition would like to extend a sincere thank you to both Governor Edwards and LA DOTD Secretary Dr. Shawn Wilson for the state's ongoing commitment to complete LA 1, and for putting forth the time and resources to bring together a winning grant submission team. There will be more work for us all as we continue our partnership to see this resilient highway to completion,” said Boulet.

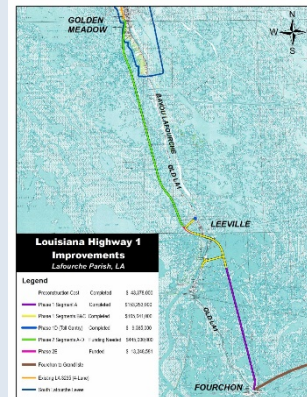
“We would also like to thank NOAA CO-OPS scientists for the science they applied in modeling tidal inundations on existing at-grade LA 1 and HNTB Corporation analysts who compiled data from LA 1 stake holders to determine the project’s benefit/cost ratio,” he concluded.

In 2011, Phase 1 of the LA 1 Improvement Project was completed with the opening of a 5.8-mile elevated highway from Port Fourchon to Leeville. The first segment of Phase 2 was completed earlier this year. It involved widening the curve at the on-ramp to the existing

elevated highway at Leeville and constructing a 400-foot highway extension that will tie into the new elevated highway from Leeville to Golden Meadow now slated for construction starting next year.

LA 1 PROJECT AREA MAP

Click on the map to the right to view a larger image of the LA 1 Improvement Project area. Phase 2 Segments A-D are represented in green on the map.



ABOUT THE COALITION

The LA 1 Coalition is organized for coordinating, providing, and disseminating public information in relation to improving the highway system between Grand Isle and U.S. Highway 90. The LA 1 Coalition is a 501(c)(4) organization. Donations are not tax deductible. The LA 1 Coalition is located within the offices of the South Louisiana Economic Council on the campus of Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, LA. Executive Director is Henri Boulet.

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