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Senator Bret Allain Announces and Applauds Funding of Bayou Chene Flood Control Structure

Today, state and local officials held a press conference at Morgan City's Municipal Auditorium to announce that the Bayou Chene Flood Control Structure has been identified by the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) as a project to be funded with future RESTORE Act funds. These funds are a result of settlements associated with the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

In 2011, a temporary structure was placed in Bayou Chene to block flood waters from impacting portions of St. Mary, Assumption, Lower St. Martin, Lafourche, and Terrebonne parishes. The project is credited with saving many homes and businesses in these areas, and officials have been pushing for recognition of the project's importance in the four years since.

In 2012, Sen. Bret Allain, Rep. Sam Jones, Rep. Karen St. Germain, and Rep. Joe Harrison were successful in getting the project listed in the state's Master Plan, a meaningful step on the road to funding. Rep. Gordon Dove, chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, also played a large role in keeping state officials focused on this project due to its regional impact.

"Knowing that the BP money would be coming down the road, our first goal was getting in the Master Plan. In order to be considered for funding, that is a must," Sen. Allain explains.

Sen. Allain also added that St. Mary Levee District President Bill Hidalgo's appointment to the CPRA board "cannot be overstated."

"Bill's continual push for this project is one of the main reasons we are here today," Sen. Allain continued.

Funds for various projects around the state, including the Bayou Chene project, will come from installments paid by BP and others into "buckets." The type of project will determine from which "bucket" a particular project receives its funding.

Sen. Allain concluded, "We are still very early in this process, but today is a great day for District 21 and south central Louisiana. Three years ago, this project wasn't even in the state's overall plan for coastal protection. To have a commitment for funding in hand this quickly is a testament to the hard work many people from all of our parishes have put in over the past few years. I also want to thank the Governor's Office and the CPRA for being responsive to this project. The flood fight in 2011 was the ultimate case study, and this project proved its worth. I'm very glad the state has recognized the same."