



LOUISIANA SENATE

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**SEN. ALLAIN APPLAUDS CPRA DECISION
TO INCLUDE BAYOU CHENE FLOODGATE PROJECT
IN 2012 COASTAL MASTER PLAN**

District 21 State Senator Bret Allain announced Tuesday that the Bayou Chene floodgate project will be added to the 2012 Coastal Master Plan developed by the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA). A temporary floodgate structure was used during the 2011 spring flood with great success. CPRA Executive Director Jerome Zeringue advised area elected officials of the decision to change the first draft of the plan—a plan that originally did not include a permanent structure in Bayou Chene.

After much discussion and feedback from citizens and officials during the CPRA's public meetings on the plan, the consensus was that a permanent structure on Bayou Chene needed to be added to the plan, according to Zeringue. Zeringue added that the plan was re-evaluated and that changes have been made to place the Bayou Chene project in the final draft.

"The time for studies and evaluation is over," Sen. Allain said. "The project proved its merits when the stakes were highest, and it helped save homes and businesses in St. Mary, Assumption and Terrebonne parishes."

St. Mary Levee District (SMLD) President Bill Hidalgo addressed the Bayou Chene addition by saying that the board and Executive Director Hilary Thibodeaux are "fast-tracking" the process to "get the project as shovel-ready as possible for when funding is available." The district has retained an engineering team comprised of Shaw, Miller Engineers, and T. Baker Smith to assist in the design of the project.

"I want to commend the efforts of the St. Mary Levee District for their efforts during the flood fight and for their current work to get the project designed by such a great group of local firms," Allain said.

With the project now recognized in the official plan, an important step in the process of funding the \$80 million project has been met, but Sen. Allain stressed that much more work still needs to be done to make the project a reality.

"This development on the Bayou Chene floodgate is good and welcome news for our region. We need to continue to work hard until the day that our area is better protected from flooding when this project is completed."

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