



Minerals Management Service

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News Release

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MMS Awards \$718,000 Grant for St. James Parish Conservation

West bank project will protect and restore wetland swamps and forests

NEW ORLEANS – The Minerals Management Service (MMS) has awarded a grant for \$718,620 to St. James Parish in Louisiana through the Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP), for the purchase of a 600-acre tract in the Coteau Chevreuil Wetlands area in South Vacherie, on the west bank of the parish.

Purchase of the wetlands tract will provide protection to valuable cypress, tupelo swamp, and bottomland hardwood forest trees. South Vacherie is located approximately 35 miles west of New Orleans, and 55 miles south-southwest of Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

“MMS is committed to helping the state in its vital coastal restoration efforts through CIAP,” said MMS Gulf of Mexico Regional Director Lars Herbst. “We are proud to partner with St. James Parish in supporting important projects like the West Bank Conservation and Protection Plan in South Vacherie.”

St. James Parish plans to create conservation buffers on the entire tract; as well as adopt local ordinances that will help protect and prevent any loss of wetlands habitat and wildlife in this area from future land development or harvesting of trees.

The CIAP was created by the Energy Policy Act of 2005. Through the program, MMS will provide \$250 million in grants annually, from 2007-2010, to six eligible Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas producing states – Louisiana, Alabama, Alaska, California, Mississippi, and Texas. The funding to Louisiana included \$127.5 million for each of the fiscal years 2007 and 2008 and \$120.9 million for 2009 and 2010. Nineteen Coastal Political Subdivisions (parishes) share in funding outlined in the state’s approved plan.

—MMS—

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