

**Davis Pond Freshwater Diversion
Structure Dedication Ceremony
Remarks for Col. Thomas Julich
March 26, 2002**

I'd like to welcome everyone to this most auspicious of occasions. It is indeed a great day for Louisiana and the nation. To be dedicating a project that will have such a positive and significant impact on Louisiana's coast is very exciting.

There were many agencies as well as private citizens who were and will be involved in the planning, design, construction and operation of the Davis Pond Freshwater Diversion Structure. We can all be proud to have a part in a project so instrumental in restoring Louisiana's coastal wetlands.

Everyone here today recognizes the vital importance of this project to the very existence of our state's coast. Without the Davis Pond Freshwater Project, and Caernarvon before it, Breaux Act projects and future Coast 2050 projects, we stand to lose an additional 630,000 acres by 2050. Diversion projects play an important role in reintroducing fresh Mississippi River water to nourish, restore and enhance our coastal basins and their all-important estuaries.

This project demonstrates the thin line the Corps walks as it balances its historic mission of developing and protecting our water resources with projects that fulfill the nation's environmental needs. We have learned that environmental sustainable projects can only be achieved through the combined efforts of all levels of government and the private sector. Today's ceremony dedicating the Davis Pond Freshwater Diversion Project is symbolic of the synergy that has developed in this state when it comes to saving our coastal landscape.

As I said, we can all be proud.

We will now begin our ceremony. Ladies and gentlemen, please rise for the presentation of Colors, our National Anthem and the Invocation. The Hahnville High School Reserved Officer Training Corps will post the colors for today's ceremony. Ms. Emily Anderson of Loyola will sing and Mr. Kyle Roussel of Eual J. Landry Middle School will play our National Anthem.

Advance the colors.

The Color Guard enters, marches to front of stage, halts, dips flags.

National Anthem performed.

Color Guard asks Col. for permission to post colors.

Col. salutes and replies,

Permission granted.

ROTC posts the Colors.

Reverend Michael Hammett, paster of the Luling United Methodist Church, will now give the Invocation.

Reverend gives Invocation.

Ladies and Gentlemen, please be seated.

I'd like to introduce our speakers for today's ceremony:

To my right is Mr. Albert Laque, President of St. Charles Parish and Mr. Jack Caldwell, secretary of the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources. To my far left is Mr. T. Bradley Keith, state director for Senator Mary Landrieu's office; Mr. Bob Mann, state director for Sen. John Breaux's office, Lt. Gen. Bob Flowers, chief of engineers of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Mike Foster, governor of Louisiana, and our keynote speaker, the Honorable Billy Tauzin, Louisiana's representative in Congress.

I'd also like to ask New Orleans District employees who had a role in the planning, design or construction of Davis Pond to please stand up. These people worked together to get this project off the ground and they did it effectively and efficiently. We thank you for your efforts.

Our first speaker this afternoon is an avid sportsman and outdoorsman; a man who is extremely supportive of our coastal activities. I've met with him on many occasions and he strongly believes that the future of our coast is the future of Louisiana. May I introduce the governor of Louisiana, Mike Foster.

Foster speaks.

During my tenure as Colonel of this district, I have worked closely with our next speaker on coastal restoration and flood control issues. As president of St. Charles Parish, Mr. Albert Laque has been a strong proponent of our flood control efforts and is an avid believer in restoring Louisiana's coast. I want to thank him for his assistance in coordinating this ceremony; his staff has been most accommodating and we appreciate their efforts.

Laque speaks.

Sen. Landrieu sits on the Appropriations, Arms Services, Energy and Small Business committees in the Senate. She has worked with Louisiana's delegation on the Conservation and Reinvestment Act for a couple of years now and together with Congressman Tauzin and other members of the delegation, has been successful in delivering tens of millions of dollars to the state for coastal projects. Representing Sen. Landrieu is her state director, T. Bradley Keith.

Keith speaks.

Senator John Breaux has spent 19 years in the Senate; before that 14 years in the House working tirelessly on wetland restoration issues. He is passionate about Louisiana and the need to restore the state's coast. He sponsored the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act, referred to as the Breaux Act, which has provided anywhere from \$30 million to \$60 million dollars each year for coastal restoration projects since its enactment in 1990. Representing Senator Breaux today is his state director, Mr. Bob Mann.

Mann speaks.

DNR, and particularly Jack Caldwell, have worked closely with the Corps on Davis Pond, as well as numerous other coastal restoration projects. Jack is extremely committed to coastal restoration and his dedication and persistence have been instrumental in getting this project completed. We look forward to continuing partnership with Mr. Caldwell in our joint efforts to save Louisiana's coast. Mr. Caldwell...

Caldwell speaks.

Our next speaker is the commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Lt. Gen. Bob Flowers. Before his current assignment as Chief of Engineers, Gen. Flowers served as division commander of the Lower Mississippi Valley and is very knowledgeable about our coastal problems and the benefits to be derived from the Davis Pond Freshwater Diversion project. He is a hands-on guy and has followed this project from its initial stages. He is also extremely sensitive to our environmental responsibilities and together with many others, developed some operating principles that will guide our future efforts. He will present them today. I am very proud to have him with us. Gen. Flowers....

Flowers speaks.

May I now introduce our keynote speaker, Congressman Billy Tauzin. Congressman Tauzin represents the 3rd Congressional District that includes a major portion of Louisiana coast from the mouth of the Mississippi River to Lafayette. He is in his 12th term in the U.S. House of Representatives and has served the 3rd District longer than any of his predecessors. An author, amateur actor and native Cajun, Congressman Tauzin proudly reflects the culture and values of South Louisiana and is actively involved restoring his state's coastal wetlands. Congressman Tauzin...

Tauzin speaks.

I have a couple of very important messages. First, I know everyone will want to thank Dow Chemical for providing the great food and refreshments we have available at the end of the ceremony.

Before that, however, we will retire the Colors and signify the opening of the structure with officials pulling on the ceremonial lever.

I ask everyone to stand as the Hahnville ROTC retires the Color. Once the colors are retired, I then ask that everyone please be seated so that officials may perform the ceremonial opening of the structure.

Retire the Colors.

Hahnville ROTC moves forward, salutes and asks Col. Julich for permission to retire the Colors.

Permission granted.

ROTC retires the Colors.

Officials and dignitaries will now pull the lever signifying the opening of the structure and the end of the ceremony.

Thank you.

End of ceremony.