



Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana

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COASTAL RESTORATION EFFORTS PUT ON HOLD AGAIN

(Baton Rouge 10/6/06/) Over a year after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita devastated the Louisiana coast, Congress has yet to make any real progress on funding Louisiana's coastal restoration efforts. Louisiana's current restoration hopes are tied to the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) and a possible deal on Outer-Continental Shelf (OCS) revenue sharing, but both efforts have stalled as Congress heads into recess with no assurances that the Senate and House can reach a compromise on either deal.

While there is still some hope for progress on WRDA and OCS legislation in the lame duck session, it won't be enough to sustain a comprehensive and programmatic approach to restoring coastal Louisiana. If Congress is able to reach a compromise on the pending bills, the cumbersome and delayed passage of either measure may in fact be more indicative of the limited capacity of the federal government to respond in an adequate and urgent manner to the plight facing Louisiana's rapidly vanishing coast.

"The larger problem is that even if a deal can be struck to pass WRDA and pass some version of revenue sharing, these funding vehicles may still be too

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ADD – 1

limited to achieve any meaningful restoration effort,” said Mark Davis Executive Director of the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana. “Despite the efforts of our delegation, the state, and the Coalition, the authorizing and funding vehicles are too limited and too broken to rise to this challenge. It is time face this reality and find a new way forward.”

In 1989 and 1991, Louisiana’s restoration program and the Coastal Wetlands Planning Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA) were created out of whole cloth to specifically address Louisiana’s dire coastal landloss problems. The scale and urgency are greater now but that should serve to motivate us, not daunt us.

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