



Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana

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For Immediate Release

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CONGRESS SIGNALS END FOR MRGO

(BATON ROUGE, LA. June 9, 2006) – A key component of the Supplemental Appropriations Bill agreed on by House and Senate conferees will, at the least, deauthorize the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet as a deep draft channel. “This is a day that the people of south Louisiana have been waiting years for” said Mark Davis, executive director of the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana. The bill directs the Army Corps of Engineers to develop, in conjunction with its ongoing Comprehensive Coastal Protection and Restoration planning, a plan that would close the MRGO to deep draft navigation and address wetland losses and storm risks linked to the MRGO.

“We really owe Senator Landrieu and Senator Vitter our thanks on this. Senator Landrieu Senator did some heavy lifting in the Appropriations Committee and the conference with the House to get this done and Senator Vitter’s efforts to persuade his colleagues made a real difference”, Davis said. “With this action, the MRGO as we have known it becomes part of our history and allows us to plan for a much brighter future. The first step to planning for that future is to break the shackles to the mistakes of the past like the MRGO. The combination of this action with the other assistance provided in the Appropriations Bill gives the people of New Orleans, St. Bernard Parish and south Louisiana real cause for hope.”

The Coalition is not alone in their efforts to close the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet. “The MRGO has been a cancer eating away at SE Louisiana for 50 years,” said Carlton Dufrechou with the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation. “Now, we can truly begin to restore our coast and the first lines of defense to sustain this region.”

The closure of the MRGO has been a primary goal for the Coalition and this action represents the culmination of many hard years of work on this issue. The Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana is the leading citizens’ organization devoted to the restoration of coastal Louisiana, America’s Wetland.

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