



Coalition To Restore Coastal Louisiana

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CRCL and CITGO Team Up to Restore Cameron Shoreline

More than 100 volunteers join the effort in commemoration of the 11th anniversary of Hurricane Rita

(Baton Rouge, LA –September 15, 2016) More than a hundred CITGO volunteers in partnership with the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana (CRCL) will storm Cameron Beach on Saturday, Sept. 24 to participate in a coastal restoration project, 11 years to the day after Hurricane Rita slammed into the coast and devastated the region.

CITGO and community volunteers working with CRCL staff will plant 28,000 plugs of dune grass on a two-mile stretch of East Holly Beach in an intense effort to secure beach shoreline in anticipation that dunes will result and provide a critical line of defense to the inland marshes that lie just above.

“The Cameron shoreline was devastated 11 years ago by Hurricane Rita, the most powerful hurricane ever recorded in the Gulf of Mexico,” said Kimberly Davis Reyher, CRCL’s Executive Director. “But today, its recovery is a testament to what can be accomplished when government, industry, non-profits and concerned citizens come together.”

The project caps a three-year collaboration between CITGO and CRCL that already has engaged hundreds of volunteers in restoring and protecting more than 12 miles of Cameron shoreline. CITGO volunteers have donated thousands of hours of service to the ongoing battle to restore Cameron Parish’s coastal beaches that provide Southwest Louisiana with a critical line of defense.

“The CITGO Lake Charles Refinery has been operating in Louisiana for more than 70 years,” said CITGO Lake Charles Manufacturing Complex Vice President and General Manager Tomeu Vadell. “The commitment of our volunteers to return to Cameron Parish for additional planting demonstrates our longstanding commitment to this region. Together, we continue to enhance the communities where we operate by conserving the protective natural habitats that are critical to their prosperity.”

After Hurricanes Katrina and Rita struck in 2005, CITGO was one of the first organizations to take part in relief efforts and provided funding and fuel to non-governmental organizations and first responders. The operations at the CITGO Lake Charles refinery were brought back online in record time so that fuel and other desperately needed products could be provided to the region and nation, he said.

While there is still a lot more that must be done, Saturday’s dune grass planting is one more step in making the Cameron shoreline the natural storm buffer that it once was, said Dr. Deborah Abibou, CRCL Restorations Program Director. “The dune grass acts like a net both above and below the sand. Above the beach, the grass catches blowing sand helping to form the dunes. Below the sand, the roots help hold the sand, silt and soil in place to prevent erosion.”

“Storms in the Gulf Coast have resulted in significant coastal change through the erosion of beaches, dunes and disappearing wetlands. The Louisiana coast loses more than 16 square miles of land every year, including critical wetlands that act as natural habitats to native species,” said Reyher.

About CRCL:

Founded in 1988, The Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana is the longest-standing statewide non-profit organization driving bold, science-based action to rebuild Coastal Louisiana through outreach, restoration and advocacy. With the support of members and volunteers, CRCL advocates strong coastal policies and implements restoration projects across Coastal Louisiana.

About CITGO:

CITGO, based in Houston, is a refiner, transporter and marketer of transportation fuels, lubricants, petrochemicals and other industrial products. The company is owned by CITGO Holding, Inc., an indirect wholly owned subsidiary of Petroleos de Venezuela, S.A., the national oil company of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. For more information, visit www.CITGO.com.

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