

Charlotte A. Randolph, *Parish President*

PRESS RELEASE

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Elevated La. Hwy 1 between Leeville and Fourchon open to traffic



Lafourche Parish President Charlotte Randolph, center, and Governor Bobby Jindal, far right, at the elevated La. Hwy. 1 ceremony in Fourchon.

Photo by Leigh Guidry

(Fourchon, La.) – With the snip of a ceremonial red ribbon, state, local and parish officials last Friday set in motion the opening of the long-awaited elevated 6.8 mile section of La. 1 between Leeville and Port Fourchon to traffic Tuesday night.

The \$137-million dollar roadway replaces the ground-level highway, which is sinking and is prone to flooding during heavy rains and tropical storms.

The highway corridor is a key link for Port Fourchon and major oil company operations to the rest of the nation.

During the ceremony Governor Bobby Jindal pointed out the importance of the corridor, particularly for energy production and hurricane evacuation.

“We have to hope for the best,” Jindal said, “while we prepare for the worst.”

“Our top priority is jobs,” the Governor said. “And, the critical part of creating jobs for the people of Louisiana is investing in infrastructure.”

Lafourche Parish President Charlotte Randolph said the plan for the elevated Hwy. 1 between Golden Meadow and Port Fourchon is vital to the country’s economy and energy security.

“Today is a grand day for Lafourche Parish,” Randolph said. “We’ve been awaiting it for a long time. And, to all you naysayers the day is here.”

The opening of the Leeville to Fourchon section completes Phase 1 of the project. Phase 2 will connect Golden Meadow to Leeville, according to the La. 1 Coalition.

A recent study by Department of Homeland Security reports that a 3-month closure of the existing elements of the “old” Hwy. 1 could cost of nearly \$8 billion dollars because it would shut down Port Fourchon from the nation’s highway transportation system.

According to the La. 1 Coalition the vulnerable ground-level La. Highway 1 from Golden Meadow to Leeville has been overtopped by storm surge and closed to traffic for 23 days since 2005.

It is the only road to Port Fourchon, which services over 90 percent of deepwater energy production in the Gulf of Mexico and supports 16% of this nation's energy.

Mean Sea Level Rise will cause La. 1 road closures of 90 or more consecutive days per year by the late 2030's, and a powerful storm could result in a 90-day outage even earlier.

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