



NEWS from the LA 1 COALITION

For Immediate Release

December 31, 2007

Contact: Henri Boulet, Executive Director

985-448-4485 / henri.boulet@nicholls.edu

Phase 2 of LA 1 Improvement Project Proceeds with Right-of-Way Identification

(Lafourche Parish, Louisiana) The Louisiana Highway 1 (LA 1) Improvement Project continues to gain momentum as contractors begin defining the specific right-of-way required for construction of Phase 2 of the project from Golden Meadow to Leesville.

On December 20, the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) authorized a contract with engineering firm Wilbur Smith and Associates to provide final right-of-way drawings by August 2008 for the eight-mile stretch of two-lane elevated highway. The State will use the drawings to acquire required right-of-way access for the project phase from Golden Meadow to Leesville. As part of the contract, Wilbur Smith will also provide location, size, and activity status of pipelines within the proposed highway area as they finalize centerline alignment.

The removal and relocation of identified pipelines will be a costly, separate endeavor that must be done prior to the construction of Phase 2. Because construction of Phase 2 occurs in a totally new highway alignment, it is the State's responsibility to relocate conflicting utilities and pipelines. The LA 1 Coalition is now working to identify potential sources of funding for this important step in pre-construction.

It is estimated that approximately \$250 million is needed for actual construction of Phase 2 of the LA 1 Project. With the state DOTD facing a \$14 billion backlog in state highway work, the Coalition is seeking a commitment from the federal government for the shortfall. To this end, the LA 1 Coalition, along with local, state & federal government officials, and energy company representatives participated in a Congressional Quarterly forum in Washington D.C., in October to discuss strategies for acquiring the necessary federal funding to complete the LA 1 Project.

Construction is now underway on Phase 1 of the project, which includes a fixed high-level bridge across Bayou Lafourche in Leesville and a two-lane, elevated highway from Leesville to Fourchon. The fixed high-level bridge in Leesville is scheduled for completion in 2009, while the 5.3 mile elevated highway between Leesville and Port Fourchon is scheduled to open in 2011.

The LA 1 Coalition is a 501(c)4 non-profit corporation working for highway improvements from U.S. Highway 90 to the coast in Lafourche Parish, Louisiana, along the Louisiana Highway One corridor. For more information, visit www.la1coalition.org.