

# STATE OF THE PORT

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER • VOLUME 01



I'd like to welcome you to our newest effort, a quarterly newsletter that will seek to inform, enlighten, and most of all, let you get to know more about who we are and what we do in Port Fourchon.

Our Port has a long and storied history with great success, facilitating job growth and opportunity for our community, and we are excited about celebrating our 60th year in 2020.

Before discussing where our Port stands today, I'd like to salute those that came before us and how Port Fourchon came to be. The birth of our Port occurred in 1960 thanks to Louisiana State Senator A.O. Rappelet, who passed legislation to create the Greater Lafourche Port Commission (GLPC).

Rappelet, unlike many of his counterparts, saw the potential of putting a port at the mouth of Bayou Lafourche to lure the banana trade from New Orleans to Lafourche Parish.

While he missed the boat on bananas both literally and figuratively, Rappelet's keen insights regarding Fourchon's location eventually helped us become a "Port of the Future" by building infrastructure and clearing channels to support a burgeoning oil and gas industry.

Led by the ONLY elected Board of Commissioners in the state, Rappelet's vision was expanded upon and grew into what we see today, which is a port with a large collection of valued tenants that service virtually ALL deepwater offshore energy activity in the U.S. Gulf of Mexico.

As we move into our 60th year, we give tremendous thanks to the continued steadfast efforts of our Commissioners and staff here at the GLPC.

Because of them and others from the past, we are positioned well to capitalize on numerous opportunities moving forward.

For starters, we continue to work through the process of getting the necessary approvals to eventually dredge to 50 feet in Belle Pass. That water depth will allow us to one day build a deepwater rig, repair, and refurbishment facility that will most certainly spur on further investments in our Port and parish.

Of further importance, our future LNG project continues to inch closer to becoming a reality. A recent productive meeting with Energy World officials reaffirmed the



**Chett Chiasson**  
Executive Director

company's initial commitment that will see them investing nearly \$900 million in Port Fourchon and Lafourche Parish.

Additionally, we are progressing through our design-bid-build model for the construction of an Airport Corridor and Bridge project that we received a \$16.4 million federal BUILD grant for at the end of last year. This \$35 million project that has grant, capital outlay, port and Lafourche Parish Government funds attached to it will set us down the path to having an industrial park on the same footprint as our airport in the coming years.

We are also excited to announce we have applied for another federal grant program specific to coastal sea ports.

This application pursues \$14.7 million of an estimated \$24.5 million to construct a new bridge in Port Fourchon to replace the one that was removed in 2018.

When combined with last year's announcement from the state that they would invest \$150 million to complete the elevated portion of LA 1 down to Port Fourchon, which includes having LA DOTD submit for a federal INFRA grant for another \$150 million, our future certainly looks brighter than ever.

Please know our employees, which number only 40, are committed to working toward our ambitious goals, and we are on pace to meet all of them because that's who we are.

The public and private investments mentioned above amount to about \$1.7 billion coming into the 10th Ward of Lafourche Parish in the coming years.

Our founding GLPC forefathers certainly set us down a path to be successful, and our current Commissioners keep us moving towards continued prosperity as a Port and parish.

In the next several years, you will see large-scale investments being made by our Port and other partners to not only move our parish forward, but to provide more in the way of mitigation to help protect our entire region, as well as sites to enjoy recreational pursuits such as kayaking and fishing.

We are eager to see what tomorrow brings, as should all of you. But, please know that this is only a small sampling of all the great things that are going on at YOUR Port today, tomorrow, and well in to the future.

# Future Coastal Wetlands Park Continues to Take Shape Daily

What began as an idea to extract dredged materials from a developing slip, Slip D, in Port Fourchon, and place it right next door in a patch of open, water-filled marsh, has turned into a fascinating process that comes complete with its very own Master Plan.

The guiding vision as of today is to continue transforming this area that is located across the street from the Fourchon Operations building into an immersive recreational and educational area for visitors and those working at the Port as well.

Currently, the Port is in the process of securing funding to match with its own dollars to keep advancing the project forward. At this moment, the Port's initial grant submittal for the **Land, Water & Conservation Fund (LWCF)** program was successful and is slated for a second submittal cycle later this year.

Thanks to a generous grant award via Louisiana's Cajun Bayou, the 100-plus acre site will also feature several pedestal-mounted viewfinders for the community to access.

"We couldn't be more thrilled about everything we have going on out there," **GLPC Executive Director Chett Chiasson** said. "Our team at the GLPC and our Commissioners understand how important projects like these are for the overall well-being of our community and visitors alike. I applaud everyone that has already and will eventually become involved in seeing our vision for this amazing site through to its completion."

With established partnerships with agencies like **Louisiana's Cajun Bayou** and **Barataria-Terrebonne**

**National Estuary Program (BTNEP)**, the site is and will continue to undergo changes that benefit everyone.

Different species of birds and fish are already making themselves at home where lush marsh grass continues to flourish despite no plantings having taken place to date.

An excavated tidal creek 20 feet wide with spoil banks has been built up in hopes of providing a prime location for future plantings with the help of BTNEP as well as possible boardwalk access points for scenic views of the complete site for those not using it for kayaking purposes. Deeper spots within the creek could possibly

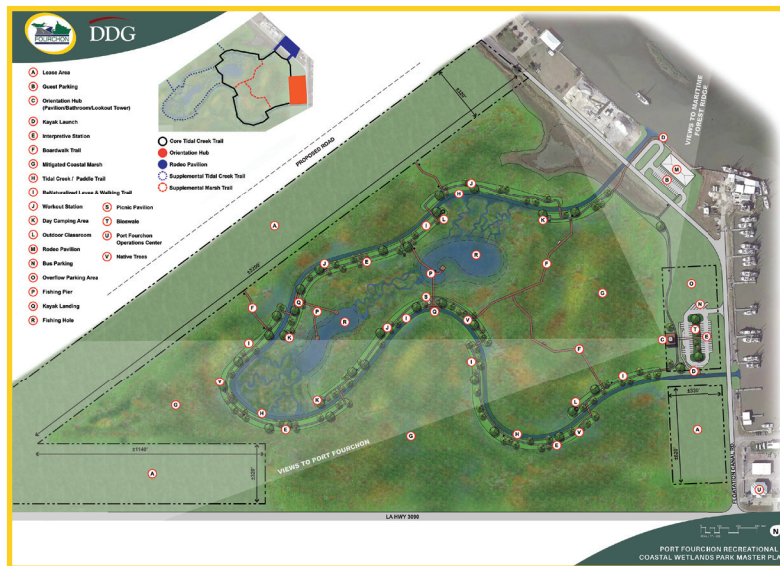
serve as small fishing holes as well.

Base fill has been placed on-site to establish the beginnings of a parking area that will one day serve as an entrance to this one-of-a-kind park, a park which showcases the amazing eco-system known to those living in south Louisiana.

"The site is truly taking shape, and we are extremely hopeful that along with our efforts that other partners, including

those in the industry sector, take note and want to become involved because there is certainly room for them to do so. And by doing so, this engagement will only lend further proof to our prevailing thought that industry and environment are not mutually exclusive, but rather exist in unison with one another in Port Fourchon," Chiasson said.

If your company or business wants to know how you can partner with us as we continue developing this site, please contact the Greater Lafourche Port Commission at (985) 632-6701 or email at [glpc@portfourchon.com](mailto:glpc@portfourchon.com).



## COMMISSIONER SPOTLIGHT

# "It was something I felt I had to do."

Now nearing 2nd decade as Port Commissioner, Cheramie says he's working to protect our community.

When **Harris "Chuckie" Cheramie** started as a Port Commissioner in 2001, he said his biggest goal was growth for Port Fourchon.

"That was the No. 1 challenge when I started – we needed to go out and get money and make the port bigger," he said. "I lived here in the 1980s when people left. I didn't want to see people leave. I didn't want to have to leave, myself. That was in my head, 'We have to keep our jobs here.'"

That mission has been accomplished and more.

Fourchon has grown immensely in the past two decades – a national leader in energy and our area's economic hub and powerhouse.

And with projects on the books to continue that growth, Cheramie said he continues to be amazed at how far the port has come.

"When I cross that bridge and look at Fourchon and see what it is today, it amazes me," he said. "I remember going to the port as a little boy, and seeing it then, but to see it



**Harris "Chuckie" Cheramie**  
Board President

now, it's just a wonderful feeling."

Cheramie said becoming a Port Commissioner is something he always wanted to do. His family always worked in the oil and gas industry, and he remembered seeing political signs as a child, and the only words he'd read on the sign were "Port Commissioner."

"Since I've been a little boy, I've been in the water," Cheramie said. "Our family has been in the oilfield since my grandfather, so for me, it's like it's something that I had to do. If I ever wanted to run for office – this is the office that it would be."

In the coming year, Cheramie said the biggest thing he wants to see progress is Fourchon Island. The work being done at that facility, Cheramie said, has been nothing short of amazing.

"I didn't think we'd ever get to this point, but we're at that point now," Cheramie said. "For me, that's something I want to continue to see move forward in the new year."

## TENANT HIGHLIGHT



Founded as Edison Chouest Boat Rental in Galliano, Louisiana, in 1960, the world-renowned **Edison Chouest Offshore Companies (ECO)** are recognized today as the most diverse and dynamic marine transportation solution provider on the globe. Coincidentally, like Port Fourchon, ECO is also celebrating its 60th anniversary this year, featuring a fleet of more than 275 vessels - the largest footprint of any company operating out of Port Fourchon. We thank ECO for being a valued tenant of Port Fourchon and are appreciative of its many contributions to the Marine Transportation Industry over the years. To learn more about Edison Chouest Offshore, visit [www.chouest.com](http://www.chouest.com).

## IMPORTANT VISITORS



### Ivy League Students Visit Port Fourchon

Several Princeton graduate and doctorate students interviewed GLPC Executive Director Chett Chiasson and staff in early November, as part of a researching mission on coastal flood management.

The group was interested in understanding the coastal flood challenges faced by Gulf Coast communities so they could draft policy recommendations for improving national coastal flood hazards reduction programs.

# Port Fourchon

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## Did You Know?

Our valued tenant base services nearly 100%  
of ALL deepwater offshore energy activity in  
the U.S. Gulf of Mexico!

