



## THE PORT MESSENGER

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER • VOLUME 05 • MAY – JUNE 2021

### TABLE OF CONTENTS:

#### PAGE 1

Airport Will Soar to New Heights Thanks to Construction of Bridge and Road

#### PAGE 2

State of the Port

#### PAGE 3

Commissioner Spotlight  
Tenant Highlight  
Important Visitors

#### PAGE 4

Port Fourchon  
Continues to Grow  
as Demonstrated by  
Latest Phase II Bulkhead  
Expansion

#### PAGE 5

Emergency Dredge  
Project Keeps Port  
Moving Ahead After  
Storms Hamper Access

#### PAGE 6

View Finders Add to  
Vision of Port's Exciting  
Future

#### PAGE 7

Seen at the Port

#### PAGE 8

Did You Know?

## AIRPORT WILL SOAR TO NEW HEIGHTS THANKS TO CONSTRUCTION OF BRIDGE AND ROAD

In partnership with **Lafourche Parish Government**, the **Greater Lafourche Port Commission (GLPC)** is excited to announce the soon-to-begin construction of a much-needed access and safety corridor linking the **South Lafourche Leonard Miller, Jr. Airport to Highway 3235**.

This **Airport Bridge and Connector Road project**, that will be headed up by **Sea Level Construction of Thibodaux, and Picciola & Associates of Cut Off**, was made possible through the awarding of a **\$16.4 million federal BUILD grant** as well as state and local dollars.

While completion of the **\$32.957 million project** is still several years away, the building of this bridge and connector road will provide a vitally important infrastructure piece that was missing until now.

"The plain and simple truth is our airport is a success story," **GLPC Executive Director Chett Chiasson** said. "When our Board of Commissioners acquired the airport from the parish in 2001, we did so knowing it was an investment in the future of Lafourche and our valued tenants and users."

According to a state-commissioned study performed in 2019, the Galliano-based airport ranked fourth out of 61 general aviation hubs with a total economic benefit of **\$97,628,000**.

While impressive, the lack of accessibility

from a transportation standpoint has continued to handicap the overall growth of the airport.

This upcoming project will change that by allowing for the development of a true industrial park adjacent to the airport; an airport featuring a **6,500-foot long runway, full instrument landing system, an AWOS weather system, full parallel taxiway, 24/7 self-service fuel station, and a pilot's lounge**.

"We know this project will bring about tremendous investment in our parish

because it will allow for larger trucks to transport goods and services directly from the airport to Port Fourchon," Chiasson said.

Future plans call for even more development at the airport in the form of a new hanger.

"Our hope is to maintain current business, attract new business, and help to

diversify our economy for our community's long-term viability. In working with **Lafourche Parish's Economic Development Director Kristi Lumpkin** and others, we hope to move projects like the airport in a direction that provides more tangible and meaningful investments in our parish, while also addressing safety concerns by making areas like LA 1 and LA 308 easier to traverse for every day commuters."

**While completion of the \$32.957 million project is still several years away, the building of this bridge and connector road will provide a vitally important infrastructure piece that was missing until now.**

# STATE OF THE PORT

## UPDATE ON WHERE WE ARE IN 2021

BY CHETT CHIASSEN, GLPC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Whenever I sit down to write these features, it reminds me just how much happens and transpires from one quarterly newsletter to the next! Since I last wrote a State of the Port piece, we have debuted a new, sleek logo, seen a new administration take over in Washington D.C., experienced a tragedy offshore, while simultaneously moving forward on advancing a number of goals we've been pursuing for years.

While I want to touch on all these various subjects, it seems only fitting that I first extend my deepest sympathies and condolences on behalf of our board and GLPC staff to the affected families and friends of the individuals who lost their lives aboard the Seacor Power lift boat in April. No doubt this was a tremendous tragedy that further speaks to the dangers of working in a marine environment. The truth is and remains that the men and women who work offshore deal with risks related to their jobs that can't be fully understood by those outside the industry. These same people work long hours and miss holidays and time with their families and friends to help bring energy to the people of our country. We ask everyone to continue to keep these individuals that lost their lives, in addition to all those that currently work offshore, in your prayers each and every day.

With this said, we transitioned to using a new logo in January that has been met with favorable comments from many out there. This new main logo branding image reflects how we want to be viewed in the future. The main symbol is bold and solid gold with a patterned approach serving to replicate the strategic design of Port Fourchon. We also have subsets of our main logo that you will see depending on what aspect of our agency we are highlighting.

Our logo was far from the only thing that changed as we headed into 2021. Another big change that happened is in the realm of national politics where a new president, Joseph R. Biden, was sworn-in on January 20th. Experiencing a change in leadership always brings about an orientation period no matter who is elected, whether that be a Democrat or Republican. As we continue to pursue an agenda of being the key service provider port for the Deepwater Offshore Energy Industry in the Gulf of Mexico, it is important to note that we as an agency have and continue to be supportive of an all-of-the-above energy approach that includes O&G, wind, solar, and LNG, among others. To this point, we would be remiss to say we aren't concerned with the direction from current leadership as it relates to how they plan to transition away from non-renewable energy sources to strictly renewables. Efforts are continuing from local, state, and delegation members in D.C. to pursue meaningful dialogue with the White House on a path forward to meet and address the needs of our country and its energy demands. We obviously believe our Port has an important role to play in this because O&G products are not just used in the cars we drive, but also an abundance of other things such as the rubber soles on our shoes that are made with petroleum-based products.

Although this is a challenging time for us, it's also a time full of activity with the commencement of an Airport Bridge and Connector Road Project as well as the reality that the completion of the elevated highway leading to Port Fourchon will begin construction within the next year. When combined with future plans to dredge deeper in our Port as well as continuing to develop bulkhead thanks to additional Port Priority Program funding, we have much in the way of Port Commission and grant dollars tasked to advancing the Port forward in the coming years.

This doesn't even take into account the opening of access to kayakers to make use of our one-of-a-kind Coastal Wetlands Park by this summer. The list goes on and on, but this is a sampling of the many things we are actively involved in as we approach this summer. Needless to say, our future is as bright as it has ever been!

And, that's why our overall mission as an agency is predictably and understandably the same as it has always been, which is: **Ready Today, Ready for Tomorrow.**



# COMMISSIONER SPOTLIGHT: KRIS CALLAIS

Cut Off native Kris Callais's father and grandfather each retired from major oil companies with over 30 years of experience. Throughout high school and college, Callais spent his summers working on a dock in Port Fourchon. Thus, he treasured the port and understood its impact long before joining the Board of Commissioners of the Greater Lafourche Port Commission in 2019.

"Port Fourchon, being the economic engine that basically runs not only Lafourche Parish but the state of Louisiana and the United States of America, has always had a place in my heart," he said. "I wanted to help it continue to grow and thrive."

Callais said he's proud of the projects he's been a part of while a member of the board and looks forward to what's in the works for the last phase of the elevated section of LA 1 and GLPC's Coastal Wetlands Park.

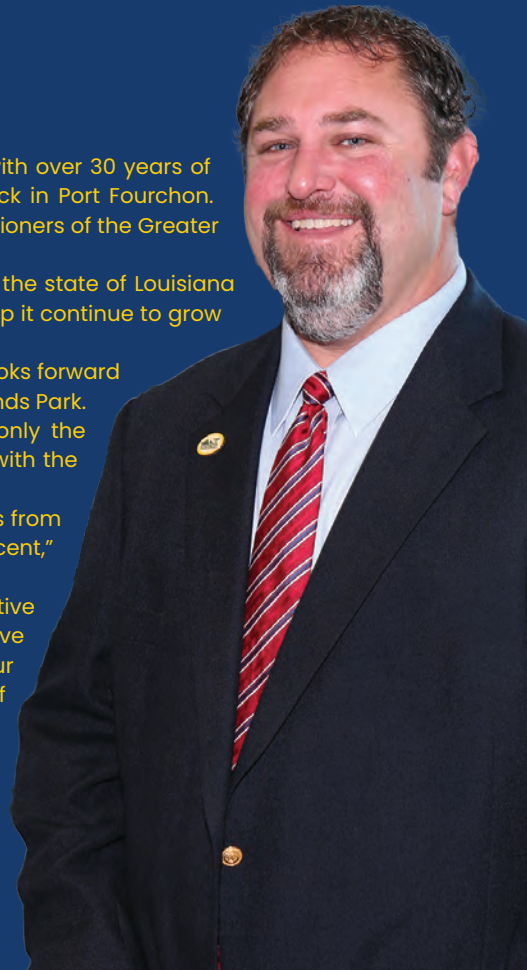
"We are building a pavilion in the Wetlands Park, which will be able to host events. Not only the community but the United States and the world could see how fossil fuel energy can co-exist with the environment," he said.

"With the LA 1 Expressway completed, we will not have to worry about any of the minor events from south winds inundating LA 1 to where we could keep the port fully open and operate at 100 percent," Callais said.

Working alongside each member of the Greater Lafourche Port Commission, from Executive Director Chett Chiasson to the Harbor Police, has been an honor, Callais expressed. "I don't believe I would want to work for any other port out there," he said. "The hard work and dedication that our director, staff and employees put in day in and day out shows daily in the accomplishments of Port Fourchon and our commission."

For Callais, being a member of the GLPC is about helping the current and future generations of Port Fourchon and its surrounding areas.

"I put a lot of heart and soul in the two years that I've been there. Every day, I go to work and try to do something to make the community strive to move forward," he said. "And the port is what keeps our community together. We are always looking for opportunities to grow, to bring in new projects and create opportunities for our younger people and anybody looking to join the workforce."



## TENANT HIGHLIGHT:



**Moran's Marina**, which is owned by Chris Moran and was established in 2015, is much more than your run-of-the-mill marina. It features a fine-dining restaurant known as C Moran's, a deli and convenience store, a charter fishing business, an event center, a bar, short & long-term housing, and a motel. The marina is a well-known spot in Port Fourchon that offers visitors and locals a place to eat and visit, as well as enjoy the world-class fishing opportunities the Gulf of Mexico provides. We thank Moran's Marina for being a valued tenant of Port Fourchon and are appreciative of its many contributions to our area. To discover more about Moran's Marina and its many services, visit [moransmarina.net](http://moransmarina.net).

## IMPORTANT VISITORS:



The **Grow Louisiana Coalition**, that works to ensure the state's oil and gas industry remains a major part of our economic and cultural heritage, recently visited with GLPC Executive Director Chett Chiasson to film a TV commercial and a long-form segment for its social media platforms. During this visit, the GLAC focused on our many partnerships with groups ranging from the state's **Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority to Restore or Retreat**. This story will further discuss how coalitions between different agencies lead to meaningful coastal projects that are helped in large part by companies representing the oil and gas industry.



## PORT FOURCHON CONTINUES TO GROW AS DEMONSTRATED BY LATEST PHASE II BULKHEAD EXPANSION

After the **Greater Lafourche Port Commission** completed 2071 Linear Feet of bulkhead as part of its **Northern Slip C expansion project** in 2019, more work quickly began to add even more bulkhead by making use of further space provided by Slip C.

Therefore, this led to the recent completion of **1100 LF** of waterfront development, which expands Port Fourchon's footprint to in excess of **76,000 LF** of bulkhead.

With this extra bulkhead now constructed, Port Fourchon has more than 4/10th of a mile of space for prospective tenants to operate from.

Many millions of dollars have been spent to develop all this bulkhead with much of that coming through a mix of Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development Port Priority Program as well as GLPC funds.

Plans are currently underway to continue building out bulkhead in the **adjacent Slip D**.

"These projects from start to finish demonstrates further our commissioner's commitment to providing our customers in the Offshore Energy Production sector with additional resources in the realm of potential future tenants who are already actively engaged in pursuing the available lease space this and other projects afford them," **GLPC**

**Port Director Chett Chiasson said.** "These efforts we are engaging in today are born from the understanding that we are open to all forms of energy production operating out of Port Fourchon. With our strategic location to the Gulf, it only makes sense to provide space for all industries representing both the renewable and non-renewable sectors."

However, the main reason the Port has continued to expand is primarily because of future projects on the books for numerous companies representing the oil and gas industry.

"When your tenants provide services and support to nearly 100-percent of Deepwater Offshore Energy Production out there, the need for more areas for expansion never goes away, despite what others may tell you," Chiasson said. "We are also blessed to have tenants that excel at what they do and continue to make a good name for themselves because of the superior services they provide. While our current trajectory as a country is rooted in a transition to other forms of energy, I think anyone would be fooling themselves if they don't believe that this is attainable without the critical services the O&G industry provide this country not only today, but will provide well in to the future."





## EMERGENCY DREDGE PROJECT KEEPS PORT MOVING AHEAD AFTER STORMS HAMPER ACCESS

An incredibly busy storm season, which ended with a direct hit from **Hurricane Zeta** in late October of 2020 posed problems for Port Fourchon, both seen and unseen.

Besides the visible scars of downed power poles and damage to buildings, another issue known as siltation emerged that hampered navigation in and out of the Port.

This same siltation helped to lessen the draft (depth) in the **Belle Pass** channel that exits into the Gulf of Mexico.

Without the necessary draft, vessels heading offshore were limited on the times in which they could safely travel through the pass.

Needing a remedy, the GLPC team worked with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to perform an emergency dredge project to bring the pass back to its full 27-foot depth.

"We are always guided by the realization that our tenants and users are what make Port Fourchon what it is," GLPC Executive Director Chett Chiasson said. "When we found out about this siltation, we were quick to act. This required us to spend GLPC funds to address the problem in short order, which we did."

After beginning in early December, the project spanned nearly six weeks.

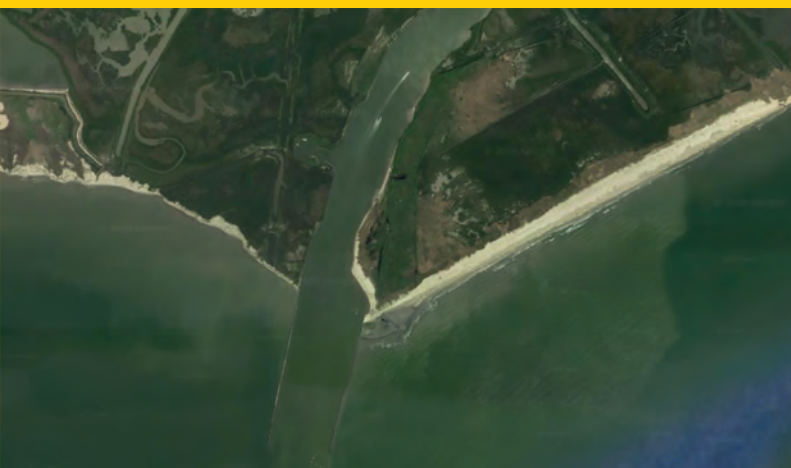
By mid-January, the depth in Belle Pass had been restored to its previous levels.

Harbor Police Marine Patrol worked with vessels throughout the duration of the project to make sure travel in and out of the Port continued without interruption despite the work being done by the dredge.

The ability to operate inside the ports waterway system is key to tenants and users being able to conduct their daily business.

According to Chiasson, there was no question about the urgency the emergency dredge project demanded.

"Without our tenants and users our Port, region, state, and nation, lose the vital offshore services we need to power our lives," Chiasson said. "When you think of it in those terms you can better understand why we moved in the fashion we did to return the Port to the ease of access it had prior to the storms Mother Nature threw our way."







## VIEW FINDERS ADD TO VISION OF PORT'S EXCITING FUTURE

With such a beautiful coastal landscape surrounding Port Fourchon, an idea was forged in 2019 to bring about something unique for visitors wanting to experience the amazing views more thoroughly.

After thinking about it at length, a decision was made to research the possibility of purchasing view finders.

Around the same time, **Louisiana's Cajun Bayou** was offering a Tourism Investment Program grant opportunity.

The end result was a generous grant award that was matched with GLPC dollars in order to buy four self-focusing view finders. These are the same type of view finders that you typically stumble upon when visiting far away destinations. The difference is the view finders in Port Fourchon are free to use.

Currently, two of these view finders have been installed and are available for use on the upper level of the bath house at the **Irvin P. Melancon Public Boat Launch**.

"These view finders offer unparalleled access to the surrounding visuals that make our port what it is. Whether you want to glance at the black mangroves in the adjacent marsh, do some bird-spotting, or peer offshore at the structures that help supply the critical energy that powers our country, these state-of-the-art view finders give you that ability in a controlled-setting," **GLPC Executive Director Chett Chiasson** said.

Chiasson further note that these view finders can swivel and are placed on either side of the upstairs decking that runs alongside the adjacent coastal marsh.

The remaining two viewfinders are set to be placed for use in the newly constructed **Coastal Wetlands Parks** at the entrance of Port Fourchon once a proposed orientation hub is built there. The plan as of now is that the Coastal Wetlands Park will open to kayakers in June.






**FIVE OF THE TOP 10  
LAFOURCHE PARISH  
EMPLOYERS OPERATE  
FROM AND/OR UTILIZED  
PORT FOURCHON.**



FOURCHON



FOURCHON



**ON ANY GIVEN DAY** YOU CAN  
FIND COMMERCIAL SHRIMP  
BOATS INTERMIXING WITH  
SERVICE SUPPLY VESSELS IN  
THE WATERWAYS LEADING IN  
AND OUT OF PORT FOURCHON.



IN TOTAL, PORT FOURCHON  
PLAYS A STRATEGIC ROLE IN  
FURNISHING THIS COUNTRY  
**WITH ABOUT 18% OF ITS  
ENTIRE OIL SUPPLY.**



FOURCHON





16829 EAST MAIN STREET  
CUT OFF, LOUISIANA 70345



QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER • VOLUME 05 • MAY - JUNE 2021

# DID YOU KNOW?

The Greater Lafourche Port Commission (GLPC) and Port Fourchon were established in 1960, with the first elected board taking office in 1971. The GLPC and Port Fourchon celebrated their 60th-year anniversary in 2020. In terms of existing ports nationwide, Port Fourchon is considered extremely young when compared to ports on the West and East Coasts of the United States.

