



**U.S. Department of the Interior
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NEWS RELEASE

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Louisiana Beach To Get Sand For Restoration Project

A beach restoration project that will help protect fragile Louisiana wetlands will begin later this month at Holly Beach in Cameron Parish.

This project will reverse the area's alarming rate of shoreline erosion and protect over 10,000 acres of fragile wetlands critical to the sustainability of the communities in the parish.

"The Holly Beach area has long been a high priority of the State's coastal restoration program," said Jack Caldwell, Secretary, Louisiana Department of Natural Resources.

In a negotiated lease with the state's Department of Natural Resources, MMS will authorize the removal of nearly 4 million cubic yards of sand from federal offshore sites for the project.

"In keeping with our obligation to the environment, I am pleased that this project will enhance the overall health and safety of the area's fragile habitat," said MMS Director Johnnie Burton. "We take seriously our commitment to help protect eroded beaches and U.S. coastlines."

The sand will be placed along five miles of shoreline behind existing breakwaters and will extend the existing shoreline so as to create a buffer to better protect Louisiana Highway 82, local coastal communities, and the threatened coastal marsh areas behind the beach.

Prior to issuing the lease, MMS worked with Louisiana state officials to develop an environmental assessment. The lease contains stipulations to protect against damage to archaeological resources, wildlife, and endangered species and contains a provision to safeguard against the digging of a deep pit on the ocean floor.

MMS has long worked with certain coastal states to help restore damaged or eroded coastlines. Through agreements with local and federal agencies, sand is removed from federal offshore sites and used for beach restoration.

MMS is the federal agency in the U.S. Department of the Interior that manages the nation's oil, natural gas and other mineral resources on the outer continental shelf in federal offshore waters. The agency also collects, accounts for and disburses mineral revenues from federal and Indian leases. These revenues totaled nearly \$10 billion in 2001 and more than \$120 billion since the agency was created in 1982. Annually, nearly \$1 billion from those revenues go into the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the acquisition and development of state and federal park and recreation lands.

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MMS Internet website address: <http://www.mms.gov>