

# P R E S S   R E L E A S E



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## **Hokkaido Port Officials Visit to Discuss Panama Canal Expansion Strategies**

RESERVE, LOUISIANA

On February 6, 2013, representatives from Kushiro, Hokkaido, Japan visited the Port of South Louisiana (PSL) during a fact-finding mission regarding U.S. port strategies in preparation to the Panama Canal expansion. In 2011, Japan’s Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT) selected 10 of its ports to undergo renovations and expansions in an effort to give Japanese industries a competitive edge in the global market. For this reason, Kushiro Port Director Tetsuya Hayakawa and MLIT Logistics Officer Takeshi Koya, accompanied by Zen-Noh Grain Corp. representative Kyojei Takemoto, visited U.S. bulk ports to inquire about such things as the involvement of government in port construction, operation and maintenance, administrative entities over Mississippi River dredging and expansion, and current methods and future approaches to bulk corn handling, especially the berthing of post-panamax vessels at existing facilities.

Hokkaido, the northernmost Japanese island, is also the country’s largest prefecture. Kushiro is its most populous eastern city and the location of its main, ice-free, trading port. Hokkaido’s top exports to the United States are auto components, general machinery, iron and steel, and petroleum products. In turn, it imports fertilizer, fish, corn and feed from the United States; the latter two received from grain terminals within the Port of South Louisiana.



*(L-R): PSL’s Executive Counsel Melissa Folse-Oubre, MLIT Director Tetsuya Hayakawa, PSL’s Special Projects Officer Roy Quezaire, PSL’s Director of Business Development Linda Prudhomme, MLIT Logistics Officer Takeshi Koya, Zen-Noh’s Kyohei Takemoto, and PSL’s Foreign Trade Zone Manager Lisa Braud*

The Port of South Louisiana, a 54-mile port district on the Mississippi River between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, is the largest tonnage port in the Western Hemisphere. The cargo it handles accounts for over 50 percent of all Louisiana imports/exports.

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For more information about the Port of South Louisiana or this particular topic, please contact Alexandra “Alex” Hernández at (985) 652-9278 or [ahernandez@portsl.com](mailto:ahernandez@portsl.com), [www.portsl.com](http://www.portsl.com).