

P R E S S R E L E A S E



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PORT OF SOUTH LOUISIANA PARTICIPATES IN 33rd ANNUAL PAL CONFERENCE

Charenton, LA

Last week, representatives of the Port of South Louisiana, led by Executive Director Paul Aucoin, participated in Ports Association of Louisiana's (PAL) 33rd annual conference held in Charenton, Louisiana. Hosted by Abbeville Harbor & Terminal District, Port of Iberia District, Greater Krotz Springs Port Commission, Morgan City Harbor and Terminal District, and West St. Mary Port, Harbor, and Terminal District, this year's *LA Ports are Bridges to the World* conference was marked by discussions on dredging of Louisiana's waterways, the condition of the state's transportation infrastructure, and the status of the oil and gas industry.

As of late, high water and depth restrictions have brought to the forefront the significance of maintaining proper depth of our waterways, particularly that of the Mississippi River, on not only the economic health of the state, but that of the nation. According to economic estimates, the Mississippi River and its tributaries have over a \$200 billion annual impact on the U.S. economy. As Sean Duffy of Big River Coalition stressed early on during the conference, it all starts with funding from the federal government. "We have ourselves a 10,000 pound gorilla and not enough bananas," he said. Congressman Charles Boustany, who spoke during Friday morning's session, stated that securing federal funding for dredging is his top priority. Ports are an economic engine: 25% of Louisiana's economy depends on exports; that is, \$47.7 billion is contributed from foreign trade. "This issue is critical to Louisiana's federally maintained ports and to not dredge these waterways impacts regional and national commerce, affects Louisiana job growth, and reduces our economic competitiveness," said Boustany. A healthy infrastructure in Louisiana is imperative, especially when five Louisiana ports rank within the largest 11 tonnage ports in the United States. As presented by Dr. James Richardson, one in five jobs are attributable to trade-related industries.

The speaker's panel on Thursday included Louisiana Economic Development's (LED) newly-appointed Secretary Don Pierson and Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development's (LA DOTD) Secretary Shawn Wilson. Pierson spoke about the tremendous influx of foreign investment (\$60 billion) in Louisiana and LED's commitment to continuing to grow the state's economy by offering tools to businesses, such as project management, incentives, and domestic and international economic development programs. Wilson, in turn, spoke of the challenges of preserving transportation infrastructure, like roads and bridges, up to standards faced with increased maintenance costs and low state revenue. However, he stated that funding within the Port Construction and Development Priority Program (PPP), which is used by Louisiana ports to establish land-side facilities and infrastructure, has increased from \$20 billion to \$40 billion.

Louisiana is now entering into the 15th consecutive month of low crude oil prices, said Don Briggs, President of Louisiana Oil and Gas Association, The demand for oil cannot keep up with the surplus

worldwide (2.6 billion barrels per day), lowering prices and causing mass layoffs. Thus far, 10,000 jobs have been lost in Louisiana. In turn, healthcare, education, and the transportation system have been negatively impacted. The State of Louisiana is grappling with a \$1.9 billion deficit as we move into 2017. From the looks of it, this downturn is going to get worse before it gets better unless some members from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) reduce production, thereby giving prices a chance to rebound, which doesn't seem to be the case, as presented by Emile Dumesnil, President and CEO of Dynamic Energy Services International. Iran's stored oil, for instance, is at an all-time high: Iran is set to add 1 million barrels per day into the saturated oil market for a projected global total of 3.2 billion barrels per day by 2017. Dumesnil believes a rebound may be in site in 2018.

Other topics discussed during the conference were cybersecurity by Captain David McClellan, Commander MSU Morgan City and coastal protection and restoration by Johnny Bradberry, Executive Assistant to the Governor for Coastal Activities.



Port of South Louisiana Commissioners & Staff, (L-R): Buddy Amedee, Director of Marine Cargo & Trade; Paul G. Aucoin, Executive Director; Stanley Bazile, Commission Secretary; Dale Hymel, Chief Operating Officer; Louis A. Joseph, Commission Treasurer; Linda Prudhomme, Director of Business Development; and Roy Quezaire, Deputy Director



U.S. Congressman Charles Boustany (second from right) with (L-R) Linda Prudhomme, PSL Director of Business Development; Paul G. Aucoin, PSL Executive Director, and Joe Accardo, PAL Executive Director



Louisiana Economic Development (LED) Secretary Don Pierson (center) with Linda Prudhomme, PSL Director of Business Development (left) and Paul G. Aucoin, PSL Executive Director (right)



(L-R): Roy Quezairre, PSL Deputy Director; Joe Accardo, PAL Executive Director; Paul G. Aucoin, PSL Executive Director; Stanley Bazile, PSL Commission Secretary; Louis A. Joseph, PSL Commission Treasurer; Shawn Wilson, LA DOTD Secretary; Sean Duffy, Big River Coalition; Buddy Amedee, PSL Director of Marine Cargo & Trade; Phil Jones, LA DOTD Intermodal Transportation Deputy Assistant Secretary; and Randall Withers, LA DOTD Port Priority Program Director

About Ports Association of Louisiana (PAL)

The Ports Association of Louisiana (PAL) was founded in 1984 to aid in the advancement of Louisiana ports. PAL is a non-profit trade association representing voluntary member ports and affiliated organizations. PAL helps to encourage economic development within the State of Louisiana. To learn more about PAL, go to www.portsoflouisiana.org.

About the Port of South Louisiana

The Port of South Louisiana is a 54-mile port district on the Mississippi River between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, encompassing the parishes of St. Charles, St. John and St. James. The facilities located within the port’s district consistently handle over a quarter billion short tons of cargo annually, ranking it the largest tonnage port district in the Western Hemisphere, the nation’s greatest grain exporter, and the number one energy transfer port in the United States. Along the 108 miles of deep-water frontage on both banks of the river there are seven grain transfer facilities, four major oil refineries, 11 petrochemical manufacturing facilities and several other facilities for a total of more than 50 docks owned and operated by an impressive group of resident tenants such as ADM, ArcelorMittal, Dow, Cargill, DuPont, Motiva Enterprises, Marathon, Shell, Nucor Steel., Occidental, Valero, and Occidental Chemical. To learn more, visit us at www.portsl.com, like us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/portsl), and follow us on [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/portsl).

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