

News Release

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86% of Louisiana Voters Support Adoption of 2012 Coastal Master Plan

Overwhelming Majorities Agree Coast Vital to Future and Can Be Saved

(Baton Rouge, La.—April 3, 2012) Eighty-six percent of Louisiana voters say they want their legislators to approve the state’s 2012 Coastal Master Plan, according to a [new poll](#) released today. The plan lays out a 50-year vision for protecting and restoring the coast, including increased hurricane risk reduction for coastal communities and reconnecting the Mississippi River with disappearing coastal wetlands. Overwhelming majorities of the voters surveyed in the poll believe the state’s coastal areas and wetlands are important to the state’s future and express optimism that the coast can be restored, despite decades of decline.

“This poll shows Louisiana voters feel strongly that our state’s coastal areas and wetlands are crucial to our future,” said Buster McKenzie, president of Baton Rouge-based Southern Media & Opinion Research, Inc., which conducted the poll. “An overwhelming majority of voters want their legislators to approve the 2012 Coastal Master Plan because they agree that coastal Louisiana can be saved if the projects in the master plan are implemented.”

The state’s Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority unanimously approved the [2012 Coastal Master Plan](#) Mar. 21 and sent it to the state legislature Mar. 26. The legislature must approve the plan for it to take effect.

The poll found extremely high agreement statewide that Louisiana’s coastal areas and wetlands are “very important” to the state’s future:

- 91 percent of voters statewide,
- 98 percent of coastal voters,
- 87 percent of non-coastal voters (with an additional 11 percent saying “somewhat important”).

Additionally, the poll found that 88 percent of respondents express optimism that when adequate funding becomes available, coastal areas can in fact be saved. Two potential sources of funding include Natural Resource Damage Assessment dollars from the Deepwater Horizon oil disaster and legislation in Congress that would dedicate 80 percent of expected billions in penalties from the disaster to Gulf Coast restoration, including in Louisiana. Both [houses of Congress have approved similar versions of the legislation](#), the [RESTORE the Gulf Coast States Act](#). However, Congress still needs to resolve the differences between the two bills and get a final bill to the president’s desk before it can become law.

“Voters clearly realize that the state master plan is critically important to saving Louisiana as we know it because it will protect jobs, communities, fisheries and wildlife. That’s why it’s no surprise that such an overwhelming majority of voters in the state believe that coastal areas and wetlands can – and must – be saved,” said a joint statement by the [Coalition To Restore Coastal Louisiana](#), [Environmental Defense Fund](#), [Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation](#), [Louisiana Wildlife Federation](#), [National Audubon Society](#),

[National Wildlife Federation](#) and [The Nature Conservancy](#). “The message is clear: Let’s pass the 2012 Coastal Master Plan and get this vital work underway as soon as possible.”

The statewide telephone poll was conducted between Mar. 23 and Mar. 27, 2012. It sampled 801 registered, likely Louisiana voters, based on previous voting patterns.

The poll was funded by the National Audubon Society and has a margin of error of ± 4.0 percent.

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