




St. James Parish Government

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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St James Parish Announces West Shore Connector Levee Funding

Convent, LA - St. James Parish President Pete Dufresne is excited to announce over \$18 Million in funding for the West Shore Connector Levee from Gramercy to Grand Point.

The project involves construction of a 3-mile earthen levee, connecting the Army Corp's West Shore Lake Pontchartrain (WSLP) ring levees to form a continuous levee system from Grand Point to Gramercy, greatly increasing flood protection in St. James Parish.

President Dufresne noted that the project has been an ongoing top priority of his administration.

"Since the very beginning of my administration, I made flood protection a top priority - working tirelessly with our legislators, the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) and our Congressional delegation in Washington, DC to bring long-term, sustainable flood protection to St. James Parish, said President Dufresne. "Early in my administration, we completed the Vacherie Canal Levee Lift and Armoring at the weir in South Vacherie, which provides significant protection to West Bank. This was completed just one week prior to Hurricane Ida, and without a doubt, kept the levee from breaching and prevented residents from getting water in their homes. I am excited to continue the work we've started in flood protection and better protect our community through the West Shore Connector Levee."

The Parish first applied for funding through the State's Capital Outlay program in November, 2020. Act 117 of the 2022 Legislative Session appropriated funding for the project's planning, design, and construction. Engineering surveys, geotechnical soil borings and project design will begin in early 2023. The project will provide initial protection up to 7.5 feet elevation for the East Bank of St James Parish, with the ability for protection level to be raised to near 10' elevation in the future.

"With this new funding granted by the State, today is a new day in St. James Parish's fight of flooding on the East Bank," said President Dufresne. "We continue to work with CPRA and the USACE towards seamless integration of this project with the planned WSLP ring levees around Grand Point and Lutcher/Gramercy. A continuous levee system protects more residents and allows our protection level to be raised over time as we combat water levels rising in Lake Maurepas and increased backwater brought on St. James Parish from other areas with existing flood protection in place. Our goal isn't just to protect our residents today, but to think towards the future needs of our Parish, and protect our home and our families for generations to come."

President Dufresne would like to thank Senator Ed Price, Representative Ken Brass, Speaker Clay Schexnayder, and Senator Eddie Lambert for their support of funding. He would also like to thank the State of Louisiana, CPRA, and the Pontchartrain Levee Board and its President, Seneca Boudreux, for their partnership in the project. St. James Parish also continues to support the implementation of the Upper Barataria Risk Reduction project, which will provide 100-year flood protection for the West Bank of the Parish, currently under design by the USACE.

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