

THE NEWS ROOM

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BOEMRE Awards \$225,000 in Grants for Mississippi Projects

Will Fund Hancock County Nature Trail and Post-Katrina Water Quality Study

NEW ORLEANS – The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement (BOEMRE) announced today that it has awarded two Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP) grants totaling nearly \$225,000 to the state of Mississippi and Hancock County, Miss., for the development of a historical interpretive nature trail and exhibit, and an environmental resources study program for high school students on post-Hurricane Katrina water quality.

Created by the Energy Policy Act of 2005, CIAP provides funding to the six Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) oil and gas producing states to conserve and protect the coastal environment. CIAP is an ongoing program with grant funding that is allocated based on the offshore energy revenues collected by the United States.

“CIAP is a valuable program that continues to provide assistance to states and coastal communities,” said BOEMRE Director Michael R. Bromwich. “With these grants, we are able to partner with Mississippi communities to fund important educational programs and preserve sensitive coastal ecosystems for generations to come.”

The first grant will provide \$75,000 to the state of Mississippi for the design, planning and development of the Possum Walk Environmental and Historical Trail. This project will educate visitors about the unique coastal environment, the history of the trail area, and will inform the public on how to preserve, protect and gain an appreciation for the area’s natural and historical features. The 3.1 mile long trail will extend from just south of the Mississippi Welcome Center to the Pearl River. The project is located near Pearlington, Miss., in southwestern Hancock County.

The second grant will provide \$149,868 to Hancock County, Miss., for the Hurricane Katrina Recovery and Water Quality Study, an environmental education program focusing on water quality in local area wetlands before and after Hurricane Katrina. It will give Hancock High School students an awareness of their potential impact on the environment and provide insight into potential careers they may pursue in the ecological and natural resources fields. After completing the course, students will be awarded college credit at Pearl River Community College. Hancock High School is located in Kiln, Miss., in central Hancock County.

CIAP received \$250 million in appropriated funds for each of the Fiscal Years 2007-2010 to be disbursed to six eligible OCS oil and gas producing states – Mississippi, Alabama, Alaska, California, Louisiana and Texas.

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