

**The NewsRoom**

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**Interior Department Awards \$6 Million Grant for East Grand Terre Island Restoration**

*Funding To Help Conserve And Protect State's Shoreline Environments*

**NEW ORLEANS, LA** – The Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service (MMS) has awarded a \$6 million grant to Plaquemines Parish in Louisiana through the Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP) for the East Grand Terre Island Restoration Project. These funds will be combined with an earlier grant of \$21 million awarded through the CIAP to the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources for barrier island restoration at East Grand Terre.

Funding from the grant will be used to prevent the breaching of East Grand Terre Island by building 161 acres of dune and 456 acres of marsh. This project will implement restoration measures designed and engineered to overcome the loss of habitats, both on-shore and on marine barrier islands, while preventing island breakup caused by tropical storms, high shoreline erosion rates, and lack of sand and sediment.

"The Interior Department's investment in worthwhile projects like this demonstrates what important work can be accomplished through partnerships with coastal States and parishes," said Interior Secretary Ken Salazar. "This is another big step in restoring Louisiana's barrier islands and Interior is proud to be a part of those efforts."

East Grand Terre Island is located approximately 45 miles south of New Orleans in lower Plaquemines parish, northeast of Grand Isle. The project area is in the lower Barataria Basin, part of the vital barrier shoreline complex. Through this project, approximately 3.3 million cubic yards of material will be dredged from any of seven nearby permitted borrow sites. About 1.5 million cubic yards of sand will be used to create the beach and dune habitats, and 1.8 cubic yards of silty material will be used to construct the marsh habitat on the island.

The CIAP was created by the Energy Policy Act of 2005. Through the program, MMS will provide \$250 million in grants annually, from 2007-2010, to six eligible OCS oil and gas producing states – Louisiana, Alabama, Alaska, California, Mississippi, and Texas. The funding to Louisiana included \$127.5 million for each of the fiscal years 2007 and 2008. Nineteen Coastal Political Subdivisions (parishes) share in the funding of projects outlined in the state's approved plan.

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