

# River Living



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THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF  
THE RED RIVER WATERWAY COMMISSION

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## DEVELOPMENT BEGINS ON FORTS RANDOLPH & BUHLOW STATE HISTORIC SITE

Swirling clouds of dust usually come from a strong wind, but that's not the case on the north side of Red River in Rapides Parish.

It's actually a sign of progress — long-awaited progress of development at the Forts Randolph and Buhlow State Historic Site. The Red River Waterway Commission granted final approval of the project in March and awarded the \$4.432 million contract to Westerchil Construction Company in Alexandria. The project is expected to last approximately 18 months. When completed, it will have the distinction of being the first and only state park in Rapides Parish. "This is a tremendous accomplishment for our area," said Harmon Belgard who represents Rapides Parish on the Commission. "We've been waiting a long time for this project to materialize." After several years of planning and unexpected delays, construction has finally begun. Roads are being cleared and the groundwork is being laid out.

The historic site of Forts Randolph and Buhlow also promises a positive impact on the local economy and tourism sector. This type of development brings with it the potential to draw



anywhere from 1,000 to 10,000 visitors to Rapides Parish. "It's very rewarding to see this effort finally moving forward," says Alvin Owens, Red River Waterway Commissioner. The fort museum will feature two classrooms, an on-site manager and possibly some Civil War memorabilia. There are also future plans to host re-enactments of the Red River campaign on the site which occurred during the Civil War.



Groundwork started at state park

## RRWC To Help Fund Port Expansion

The Red River Waterway Commission and the Port of Shreveport-Bossier entered into a cooperative endeavor agreement earlier this year to build an \$8 million, 100,000 square-foot warehouse and distribution center. Approximately \$2.5 million will be provided by the Commission to cover construction and development costs.

The new structure will accommodate the needs of existing port tenant, ADS Logistics. The company began operations at the port two years ago and has experienced significant steady growth. ADS provides integrated logistics and supply chain solutions to metals manufacturers. They currently service three port tenants as well as other customers in neighboring areas of Texas.



▲ RRWC Commissioners (l-r) Mickey Prestridge and Wayne Davis prepare to sign the cooperative agreement with the Port of Shreveport-Bossier.

Officials of the Red River Waterway Commission and the Port Commission are pleased about the expansion and believe it will result in a number of long-term benefits. Among the obvious are increased activity by existing port customers and additional tonnage on the Red River. But the biggest rewards are that of additional employment and commerce for the Port. "ADS Logistics is a real success story," said Red River Waterway Commissioner Wayne Davis. "It just makes good sense to invest in success."

Commissioner Mickey Prestridge echoes those same thoughts. "This is another testament to the positive impact the Port of Shreveport-Bossier has on our local economy."

Construction is expected to begin in the early part of 2009.

## BASSMASTER CLASSIC A DREAM FOR SHREVEPORT-BOSSIER

It's what many in the Shreveport-Bossier area are calling a 'dream come true' and one that brings much excitement with it. What is this dream, this defining moment? Well, it's all about fishing on the beautiful Red River during the 39th annual Bassmaster Classic. Often called the Super Bowl of bass fishing, the tournament will be held on the Red River from February 20th – 22nd in 2009. The Shreveport-Bossier area was one of only 5 top contenders being considered for next year's event.



"The improved navigation and quality of the fishery makes the river a prime destination for this event," said Red River Waterway Commissioner Mickey Prestridge. The famous three-day event will feature a dramatic presentation of the weigh-ins and hours of televised coverage. Weigh-ins will be held at the CenturyTel Center and the Red River South Marina in Bossier City will serve as the official launch site. "The marina was constructed to host events just like this tournament. It's the perfect opportunity to showcase the Red River and all its amenities," said Wayne Davis, who represents Bossier City on the Red River Waterway Commission.

There will also be a huge expo in Shreveport's Convention Center that will host over 150 vendors of outdoor products and services during the tournament.

Past events of this caliber have been known to draw nearly 70,000 spectators into the area which is



quite an economic boost. City officials from Shreveport and Bossier expect approximately \$24 million in economic impact from the tournament and all related activities and events.

This is the Bassmaster Classic's first visit to the Shreveport-Bossier cities and will bring with it historic significance and bragging rights for the area. The 2009 tournament will mark the first time that a Women's Bassmaster Tour angler will compete.

## NEW DEVELOPMENTS AT THE PORT OF ALEXANDRIA



▲ Rev. Huey P. Lawson cuts the ribbon for the Port of Alexandria's new warehouse expansion.

The Port of Alexandria recently completed a \$2 million expansion to its warehouse making it one of its largest capital developments yet. This addition, which was celebrated with a ribbon-cutting in April, was made possible by partial funding from the Red River Waterway Commission. Port officials say the expansion will significantly increase storage capabilities and aid the port in attracting large businesses like fuel giants and energy companies. The development has also generated more recognition of the port's leading status in water tonnage and prompted talk of adding rail services. "A lot of positive developments, like this expansion, will help the Port increase its occupancy and manage all current and future tonnage," said Commissioner Harmon Belgard. The Port is currently talking with three companies about moving into the new addition.

## RED RIVER WATERWAY COMMISSIONER RESIGNS

Former Commissioner S. Bruce Easterly officially resigned from the Red River Waterway Commission on June 27th as a result of the enactment of Senate Bill #718. This piece of legislation, which enforces stiffer financial disclosure laws, has resulted in a number of resignations from board members of different organizations across Louisiana.

Mr. Easterly was appointed to the Red River Waterway Commission in 2006. "The Red River is a diamond in the rough and a very strong economic engine and recreation attraction for the State of Louisiana," Easterly said in his letter of resignation. "It has been an honor and privilege to serve on the Red River Waterway Commission."

The Commission would like to extend its sincere appreciation to Mr. Easterly for his leadership and service.

## RIVER LIVING ON THE WEB

Beginning this fall, River Living will no longer be published in its printed form. The newsletter will transition to an electronic version that will be available on the Red River Waterway Commission's website ([www.redriverwaterway.com](http://www.redriverwaterway.com)). Through this publication, we will continue to inform you about the latest developments, activities and efforts of the Commission.

To receive the newsletter via email notice, please visit the website at [www.redriverwaterway.com](http://www.redriverwaterway.com) and click the Materials Request button under the Online Office link to submit the necessary information.

But that is not the only addition to the Port's facilities. Plans are being discussed and finalized for a new 2,000 square-foot office. This building would include two administrative offices, a reception area, a break room, and a meeting room to accommodate approximately 14 people. The construction, which is being funded by the Red River Waterway Commission, comes during a time of many changes for the port. "With the increased number of tenants and activities, having a central office has become a big need," said Port Authority President Marion Chaney. The Port currently leases office space from the Central LA Chamber of Commerce. Construction of the new office is expected to begin in September of 2008. It will be located on the right side of the port's main entrance.

# ONGOING PROJECTS *with funding assistance from Red River Waterway Commission*

## **Avoyelles Parish**

Brouillette Walking Trail - Agreement in place

## **Natchitoches Parish**

Port of Natchitoches - Dock/fill project  
Recreational Dredging Project – Pool 3 (5 sites),  
Pool 4 (1 site)

## **Rapides Parish**

Forts Randolph & Buhlow State Historic Site -  
Construction in progress  
Port of Alexandria - Operations Center  
Poland Recreation Area - preliminary design phase

## **Red River Parish**

Red River Parish Port - Initial phase

## **Caddo/Bossier Parish**

Port of Shreveport-Bossier - Pratt Industries project  
Port of Shreveport-Bossier - Ternium (Steelscape) project  
Port of Shreveport-Bossier - Transit Shed  
2009 BassMaster Classic

*These projects represent over \$14 million in  
funding assistance from the RRWC.*

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Marc Dupuy, Jr., Avoyelles Parish; Bruce Easterly, At-Large (resigned 6/30/08); Paul Fleming, Natchitoches Parish;  
Randell Fletcher, Grant Parish; James F. Maxey, At-Large; W. Alvin Owens, At-Large; Rogers "Mickey" Prestridge,  
Caddo Parish; Michael Simpson, Red River Parish.

*For more information, call the Red River Waterway Commission at 1-800-874-9431.*

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