



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**LOUISIANA LEADERS CELEBRATE DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR DECISION
THAT WILL PRESERVE AND PROTECT
THE CULTURE AND ECONOMIC FUTURE OF THE RIVER REGION**

RESERVE, LA – February 18, 2025 – Governor Jeff Landry, Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) Secretary Aurelia S. Giacometto, and Port of South Louisiana (PortSL) officials today jointly expressed their satisfaction with the U.S. Department of the Interior's decision to not proceed with the creation of the Great River Road Historic Landmark District, which stood to suppress job creation and economic development in St. John, St. James and St. Charles Parishes. This decision recognizes the region's unique balance between preserving its cultural heritage and safeguarding its economic and environmental future.

The proposed district, which would have designated a significant portion of the West Bank of the River Parishes as a National Historic Landmark District, has sparked considerable discussion among stakeholders throughout the state. After extensive consultation with local communities, industries, environmental experts, and preservationists, the National Park Service (NPS) decided to withdraw the October 16, 2024, Determination of Eligibility (DOE), which has resulted in prioritizing the broader needs of the region's development, commerce, and environmental sustainability.

"If you really want to lift people out of poverty, you get them work and increase job opportunity," Governor Jeff Landry said. "I appreciate DEQ's work to protect Louisiana's environment while considering new projects, including the Greenfield Grain Elevator, that bring jobs to Louisiana."

In the February 13, 2025 letter from the Department of the Interior, the Keeper of the National Historic Registry, who is responsible for determining the boundaries of eligibility for historic landmarks and districts reversed their decision for two districts along the Mississippi River: the Community of Wallace and the Greater River Road. That letter reverses the federal designation on the 22,747 acres along the Mississippi River, that would have required onerous reviews and oversight by several federal agencies in effect freezing all development and future progress of the communities of St. John, St. James, and St. Charles. In 2020, LDEQ issued the Title V permit to enable Greenfield, LLC to construct their grain elevator facility and in March 2024, LDEQ Secretary Aurelia S. Giacometto renewed the permit. However, Greenfield LLC experienced undue delays from federal equivocation. In August 2024, Greenfield LLC suspended their efforts to

A BETTER WAY TO CARGO

P.O. Box AE | Reserve, LA 70084 ■ ■ ■ ■ 985.652.9278 | portsl.com

construct on the site. Even then, Greenfield's suspension did not stop the federal agencies from designating the large swath of over 22,000 acres for federal use and thus requiring federal approval of any activities on these lands. Today's decision by the Department of the Interior under Trump's second Administration rights that injustice and helps to open Louisiana for business.

"I'm grateful that the Trump Administration understands that states and localities are better at determining their interests relating to clean air, water and developing industry than leaving crucial decisions like those to Washington," stated LDEQ Secretary Aurelia S. Giacometto.

The Port of South Louisiana, situated along 54 miles of the Mississippi River, plays a key role in the nation's energy, agricultural, and industrial sectors. The decision by the Department of the Interior ensures that the port's ongoing development will not be hindered by new designations that might have restricted the economic vitality of the historically disadvantaged West Bank community.

"Numerous US and international companies are eager to develop and expand along the Mississippi River," said PortSL CEO Paul Matthews. "These industries hold immense potential for job creation and revenue generation, ultimately improving the quality of life in our communities and breaking the chains of generational poverty. We envision an environment that attracts new businesses, restaurants, and healthcare centers, creating lasting benefits for local families."

At today's press conference, elected officials and stakeholders expressed their dedication to preserving the region's cultural and environmental legacy while ensuring that Louisiana remains a hub of commerce, innovation, and environmental stewardship. Moving forward, the agencies will continue to engage with community leaders, industry stakeholders, and environmental advocates to ensure that any future initiatives consider both the heritage and future of this important region.

For more information, please contact:

April Baiamonte

Executive Management Advisor

Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality

April.Baiamonte@LA.GOV

225-219-3957

Micah Cormier

Chief Commercial Officer

Port of South Louisiana

mcormier@portsl.com

985-652-9278