



Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program, Inc.

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News Release

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The Changing Face of the Port Aransas Nature Preserve Largest Shoreline Erosion Protection Project along the Ship Channel Now Complete

Corpus Christi, Texas, November 8, 2007 --- A \$6.35 million shoreline protection project has been successfully completed by the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program (CBBEF) and its partners to protect the Port Aransas Nature Preserve from severe erosion. Jerry Patterson, Commissioner of the Texas General Land Office will be present to lead the ribbon-cutting ceremony and celebration on **Thursday, November 8, 2007** beginning at **10:30 a.m.** at the **Port Aransas Nature Preserve**.

This unique restoration project will protect more than 1,000 acres of wetlands and associated upland habitat through the use of carefully selected erosion control structures adjacent to the Ship Channel which includes a rock revetment over 6,000 feet along the shoreline. Over 50,000 tons of limestone rock were trucked in from New Braunfels in 3,153 dump truck loads. Two jetties, 800 feet in length, have been installed at the entrance of Piper Channel. These jetties are constructed of a combination of rock and steel sheet pile. The project was completed in September 2007.

This project is a prime example of what can be done when local, state, and federal organizations work together toward a common goal. Responding to concerns expressed by the City of Port Aransas and the Airport and Channel Corporation, CBBEP was able to develop a project to address erosion concerns adjacent to the Ship Channel along the Port Aransas Nature Preserve shoreline (also known as Charlie's Pasture) and at the entrance to Piper Channel. This effort was realized by securing dedicated funding from each of the CBBEP partners; \$2.9 million from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), \$2 million from Texas General Land Office (GLO), and \$1.2 million from Airport and Channel Corporation and \$250 thousand from the City of Port Aransas and Cheniere Energy to fund the project.

The Preserve, located along the western portion of Port Aransas bordering the Ship Channel, is an extraordinary environment containing a diverse assemblage of habitats that includes freshwater and brackish marshes, estuarine areas, wind tidal flats, essential fish habitat and associated uplands. This distinctive ecosystem supports numerous species of finfish, shellfish, shorebirds, wading birds, waterfowl, and four species of sea turtles. According to a Bureau of Economic Geology report prepared for the GLO, erosion in this area claims approximately 17 feet of land per year. If the shoreline erosion was to continue at this pace, a breach of the uplands will quickly result in the permanent alteration of the hundreds off acres of wetlands.

Preserving important habitat and its associated living resources is critical to the health of our bay system. This project contains the added benefit of supporting nature tourism, a critical component of the economy for our community.

The Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program is a local non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to protecting and restoring bays and estuaries in the 12-county region known as the Texas Coastal Bend. The CBBEP implements management solutions and supports research with a focus on *Water and Sediment Quality, Freshwater Inflows, Maritime Commerce, Habitat Loss, Human Uses of Coastal Resources, and Public Education and Outreach*.

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Port Aransas Nature Preserve Shoreline before Construction



Port Aransas Nature Preserve Shoreline during Construction (Now)

