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## Landrieu Announces \$300K Award for La. Environmental Education Programs

October 16, 2008

WASHINGTON - United States Senator Mary Landrieu, D-La., today announced that for the first time, Louisiana will be a recipient of the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) grant program. The program provides funding to schools and educational institutions, enabling them to offer meaningful environmental education for students and related professional development for teachers. Louisiana State University (LSU) has been awarded a \$300,000 grant for a teacher development initiative that will expand the outreach of two programs: LSU's Coastal Roots and Louisiana University Marine Consortium's (LUMCON) Bayouside Classroom.

"The expansion of the B-WET program to the Gulf Coast area this year will be a wonderful asset to the level of environmental education that we offer to our students here in Louisiana," Sen. Landrieu said. "This grant will enhance two existing programs that help teach our young minds about the serious consequences of coastal erosion, and help them learn to take a measure of responsibility for the preservation of the environment."

"The NOAA grant will enable us to provide teacher training and resources to support our programs, LSU's Coastal Roots and LUMCON's Bayouside classroom," said Dr. Pam Blanchard, assistant professor in the LSU College of Education and the Director of the Coastal Roots program. "What our programs have in common is that they are coastal stewardship programs. Our students learn about coastal issues in the classroom, and then take what they have learned and do something positive for the environment."

In the Coastal Roots program, students learn about plants, how to grow them, and the nature and extent of coastal erosion in Louisiana. Then, students grow trees and grasses in nurseries at their schools. Once a year, they bring what they have grown to the coast and plant the trees and grasses in areas threatened by land loss.

In the Bayouside Classroom program, students learn about the importance of good water quality, and how pollution diminishes water quality. At the same time, they also monitor the water quality nearby, gaining hands-on experience and doing something positive to help take care of the environment.

This year, a total of \$1,300,000 has been awarded to five Gulf of Mexico recipients through the B-WET program. This is the first year that B-WET grant funding has been available for the Gulf of Mexico, New England and the Pacific Northwest. Prior to this year, the program has funded successful projects in the Chesapeake Bay, California and Hawaii. Projects are chosen through a highly selective process.

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