

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1804

August 5, 2010

The Honorable Bobby Jindal
Governor
State of Louisiana
PO Box 94004
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Dear Governor Jindal:

As we continue to respond and recover from the BP Deepwater Horizon disaster that took the lives of 11 men and threatens the economic and environmental sustainability of Louisiana, I write to encourage that you seize the opportunities presented by the Natural Resources Damages Assessment (NRDA) process that is now underway. BP has said "they will make things right" and this assessment is one of our best legal tools available to force them to fulfill that promise.

As the Trustee for Louisiana under the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (33 USC 2701), you have an important responsibility to identify the extent of natural resource injuries to our coast, the best methods for restoring those resources, and the appropriate compensation for the lost use of these resources. The process of fully evaluating resource injuries, including the affected ecosystems, can take years and demands the focus of the best and the brightest scientists. But as you well know, time is not on our side and BP is mounting its forces to refute the claims brought by the trustee council under NRDA.

It is my understanding that the process of restoration planning and implementation under NRDA affords a great deal of flexibility for the selection of projects by the trustee council, so long as the project has a sufficient nexus between its ecological benefits and the assessed injuries. As you well know, the Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA) program authorized by the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 contains projects that are critical near-term steps to establishing sustainable ecosystems in the areas impacted by the oil spill. Accordingly, this NRDA process may provide an immediate tool to make BP fund mitigation projects that will lay the foundation for the long-term protection and restoration of coastal Louisiana.

This is a critical moment in our state's history, and I urge you to marshal the necessary resources to maximize the restoration of coastal Louisiana under the NRDA process. It is imperative that Louisiana's elected leaders and stakeholders have a united front in making our case for funding these important projects immediately. I hope that you stand ready to join me in this fight, as the future of our coast, the health of the region's economy, and the livelihoods of countless Louisianans are at stake. Additionally, I look forward to the opportunity in the coming weeks to be briefed by you and your staff on these issues and matters related to the NRDA process.

Sincerely,



Mary L. Landrieu
United States Senator

cc: The Louisiana Legislature
Coastal Louisiana Parish Presidents