



For Immediate Release: August 25, 2015
Contact: Public Affairs Division, comments@mdot.ms.gov
Media Requests: (601) 359-9777
News Releases: <http://ow.ly/MBEPB>
www.GoMDOT.com/hurricanes
RESOURCES ATTACHED

MDOT Bridge Rebuilding Vital to Community Renewal

With its 120 mph winds and 28-foot storm surge racing towards the Gulf Coast, Hurricane Katrina made landfall on August 29, 2005 causing more than \$1 billion in damage to Mississippi's transportation infrastructure. Both the Biloxi Bay and Bay St. Louis Bridges were damaged beyond repair. The loss of the bridges disconnected the communities on both sides, adding to the long road of reconstruction the residents already faced.

"Seeing these huge concrete and steel structures lying in the water, end over end, was to me as an engineer one of the most graphic displays of the hurricane's strength," said Wayne Brown, former Transportation Commissioner of the Southern District.



The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), which funded most of the Katrina repair and cleanup five months after the storm, worked quickly to repair these vital bridges.

Normally, it takes a least one year to design a bridge the size of the Biloxi and Bay St. Louis Bridges, with three to four more years dedicated to constructing it, but the state made these bridges a top priority following the devastation. Using a method that allowed the designing, engineering, permitting and construction to be conducted simultaneously, the Bay St. Louis Bridge was dedicated in May 2007 and the Biloxi Bay Bridge opened in November 2007. The Bay St. Louis Bridge opened in 21 months with the Biloxi Bay Bridge completing in 26 months.



"MDOT executives provided the decisive, problem-solving leadership to make these bridge replacements happen within an extraordinary timeframe," said Ricky Lee, former MDOT District 6 Engineer.

While the bridges provide the necessary infrastructure for the coastal communities, they also highlight Mississippi's commitment to the arts. Using salvaged bearing plates from the old bridges, local artists created drawings that were transformed into bronze relief plaques

depicting life on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. These reliefs were installed every one-tenth of a mile on the pedestrian lane of each bridge, linking the past and the present, renewing the spirit of the region and its residents.

“We all knew the bridge would be our link to true recovery. It was built for the future, and it has given us hope that we can build our town back for the future,” said Hancock County Chancery Clerk, Tim Kellar.

MDOT will honor the over 30 artists chosen to have their work featured on the bridges on August 29th, 2015 from 1:00 p.m. until 3:00 p.m. at the Ohr-Keefe Museum of Art Katrina+10 Exhibit located at 386 Beach Boulevard in Biloxi, Mississippi.

Learn more about MDOT’s story following the destruction of Hurricane Katrina at the Katrina +10 exhibit, download vital hurricane prep resources and find information on the book, *Bridging the Road to Renewal: Katrina +10* at www.GoMDOT.com/hurricanes.



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MDOT KATRINA RESOURCES:

1. Website: www.GoMDOT.com/hurricanes
2. Photos: <http://ow.ly/RcGzR>
3. Video: <http://ow.ly/RcHpn>
4. Katrina Book: <http://ow.ly/R9D3r>
5. Preparedness: <http://ow.ly/R9nPs>

For Immediate Release: August 24, 2015
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www.GoMDOT.com/hurricanes

Video available [here](#).

Museum Docent Finds Hope, Peace at MDOT Exhibit

BILOXI, MISS. --- Residents along the Mississippi Gulf Coast all have their own story to tell when it comes to remembering Hurricane Katrina. Images of water on the rise, total destruction and houses washed away completely from properties come to mind. These memories are emotional for most survivors to recall.

The Ohr-O'Keefe Museum of Art is currently hosting a six-month examination of the catastrophic destruction, immediate relief, sustained recovery, shared experience and progress on the 10th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. The Katrina+10 exhibit tells the story of resiliency shown by citizens along the Gulf Coast following the disaster and the experiences from those on the front lines. While the exhibit is there to inspire and uplift, most survivors can't fully shake the emotion that was involved with Hurricane Katrina's devastation.

Ohr-O'Keefe Museum Docent Marge Michaud of Biloxi, Miss. recently found hope in the pod designated to the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), which showcases all that was done to reconnect communities along the Gulf Coast, including the rebuilding of the Bay St. Louis Bridge and the Biloxi Bay Bridge. For Michaud, like most survivors, some of the devastating images displayed at the museum brought her great sadness. Each day, she watches over the MDOT pod and sees the complete story, from devastation to the thriving coast today.

"I was living in Slidell at the time and lost everything," Michaud recalls. "It was very, very hard. But over the years, I've learned how to cope with it and put it where it should be. It is a memory now. I can show people the beginning and the end. Now, it's not sad."

Michaud lived in Slidell, La. by a lake in a two story home with an attic and a patio. Not knowing the seriousness of the storm, she did not take much with her when she evacuated.

"It was very hard to come home with nothing left," she said.

After traveling to her home state of Maine, Michaud eventually ended up back on the Gulf Coast.

"I packed up everything and moved back here, and now, I'm absolutely thrilled to be at the Ohr O'Keefe Museum. I'm thrilled to help showcase all that the DOT did after the storm."

Michaud is proud to help keep watch on MDOT's pod and tell the story of rebuilding infrastructures and reconnecting communities along the Gulf Coast.

“People come in here, and together, we cry and hug,” she said. “It gets very emotional. I try to tell them that there is a beginning and end to this story to and think maybe it will make them feel better.”

The MDOT exhibit brings Michaud feelings of joy, renewal and celebration.

“It is not sad over here at the DOT exhibit; it shows all that you guys had to contend with,” she said. “It really tells a nice story. The two pictures of the bridges are absolutely fascinating. They’re just beautiful. It really shows how everyone worked together as one. Now we have this wonderful museum.”

Visit the Katrina +10 exhibit at the Ohr-O’Keefe Museum of art located at 386 Beach Blvd. in Biloxi. To learn more about MDOT’s story following the destruction of Hurricane Katrina at the Katrina +10 exhibit, download vital hurricane prep resources and find information on the book, *Bridging the Road to Renewal: Katrina +10*, visit www.GoMDOT.com/hurricanes.

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2. Photos: <http://ow.ly/R9ocf>
3. Video: <http://ow.ly/R9njM>
4. Katrina Book: <http://ow.ly/R9D3r>
5. Preparedness: <http://ow.ly/R9nPs>



For Immediate Release: August 26, 2015
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Public Transit Provided Morale Boost, Sense of Community in Katrina’s Wake

Biloxi, Miss. – The havoc unleashed by Hurricane Katrina was unlike anything the Mississippi Gulf Coast had ever seen. Bridges destroyed. Communities cut off from each other. Lives changed forever.

With so many communities along the Coast cut off from each other, the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) recognized the need to quickly identify and provide solutions that would reconnect the people of South Mississippi.

“The response to Katrina’s devastation included more than the repair and replacement of critical roads and bridge infrastructure,” said Transportation Commissioner Tom King. “Residents of the region also needed access to local transportation options that connected them to destinations such as work, health care and disaster assistance centers.”

These options included public, as well as emergency response, shuttle and specialized transit services that not only met immediate needs, but also could be part of the ongoing process of rebuilding the Gulf Coast.



MDOT offered direct response and collaboration with local, state and federal organizations to address a range of mobility needs.

“Our immediate priority after the storm was to get our maintenance and operations facilities back up and running,” said Coastal Transit Authority (CTA) Director Kevin Coggin. “Because of the widespread destruction, we knew

we needed to be operational as quickly as possible.”

MDOT and the CTA worked closely together to develop a short-term Emergency Public Transportation Plan that addressed the emergency transportation needs of residents and evacuees in the entire six county region most affected by the disaster.

MDOT supported the CTA by providing equipment, such as buses and a van, as well as

facilitated talks between the CTA and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Because of this collaboration, the CTA was operational and providing free fare service to the Coast within a week of the storm.

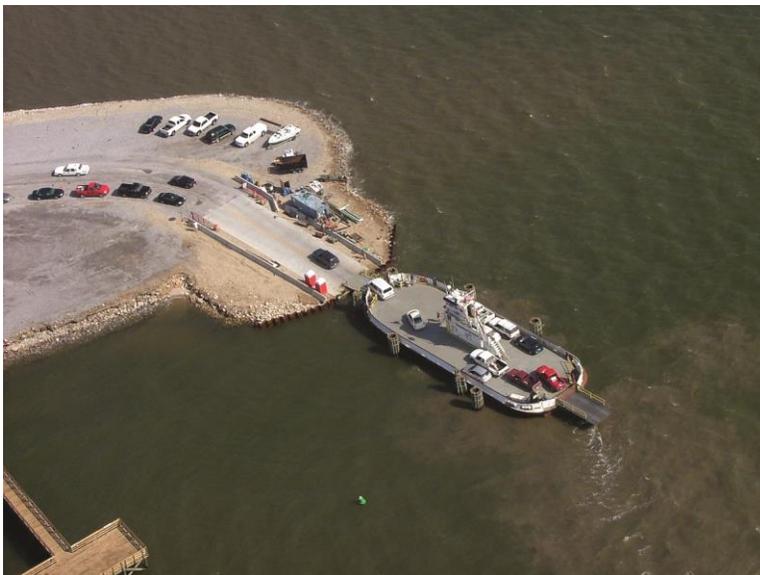


In the ten years since Hurricane Katrina hit the Coast, the CTA has replaced its entire fleet as well as replaced and modernized all of its facilities. The CTA also added Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) upgrades, such as an electronic dispatch system, to its facilities.

Reestablishing traditional forms of public transportation wasn't the only obstacle MDOT faced in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. With the Bay St. Louis Bridge being reconstructed and Interstate 10 overloaded with traffic, the traveling public faced a grueling trip between Bay St. Louis and Pass Christian, one that normally took less than 15 minutes.

“Before the new bridge opened, I was driving 55 miles- each way- to take our children to school,” said Pass Christian Mayor Chipper McDermott.

The idea of a ferry service between Bay St. Louis and Pass Christian was introduced in an effort



to reduce the length of the trip along detour routes; and in March 2006, MDOT began conducting a feasibility study to determine the possibility of establishing this service. The feasibility study was concluded in June, and a request for bids was issued in September.

In preparation for the ferry service, MDOT Maintenance crews worked around the clock and completed all phases of construction, except pile driving

and material supply, for the ferry access roads and landing pads.

The free ferry service began operation on November 1, 2006 and ran for 12 hours a day, seven days a week until the new Bay St. Louis Bridge was dedicated on May 17, 2007.

Although the ferry service lacked the ability to transport the number of vehicles that used the Bay St. Louis Bridge daily, it brought a much needed morale boost and a sense of connectedness to the area. At its peak performance, the ferry was able to transport 960 vehicles in a day.



Funding for the free ferry service, as well as access and landing area construction, was provided by Emergency Relief funds from the Federal Highway Administration. Without collaboration between multiple state and federal agencies, the idea of a free ferry service would not have become a reality.

MDOT played a vital role in rebuilding and reconnecting communities along the Mississippi Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina. The resilience shown by residents and state and local officials in South Mississippi reflects MDOT's efforts to replace a critical transportation network in record time.

For more information about MDOT's role in the Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts, visit www.GoMDOT.com/hurricanes.

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4. Quote Book: <http://ow.ly/RID5I>
5. Katrina Book: <http://ow.ly/R9D3r>
6. Preparedness: <http://ow.ly/R9nPs>

BRIDGING THE ROAD TO RENEWAL

KATRINA +10

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

QUOTE BANK

BRIDGING THE ROAD TO RENEWAL: KATRINA+10

National, State and Local Officials



KATRINA +10

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

“I’ll never forget waking up on Saturday morning and seeing what was now a Category 5 storm. Three of the deepest low pressures ever recorded in the Atlantic occurred in 2005: Katrina, Wilma and Rita. The storms were deep, they were powerful and they stayed for long, long periods of time. It was their ocean, and they could do anything they wanted in it.”

--Jim Cantore, Meteorologist
The Weather Channel

“MDOT’s response and redevelopment as part of the extraordinary journey following Hurricane Katrina is an inspirational story of not only reconnecting communities, rebuilding bridges and restoring mobility, but renewing the Gulf Coast’s economy, infrastructure and culture.”

--Tom King, Transportation Commissioner
Southern District

“Restoring mobility along the Gulf Coast was possible because of the efforts and hard work of many. Solutions were found quickly to get first responders to the coast. MDOT workers were on the scene the day of the hurricane, the day after the hurricane and for the days, weeks, months and years following. I am proud and thankful for their work.”

--Melinda L. McGrath, Executive Director
Mississippi Department of Transportation

“To get this bridge open, even to two lanes, makes a lot of difference in a lot of people’s lives.”

--Former Governor Haley Barbour
State of Mississippi

“Seeing these huge concrete and steel structures lying in the water, end over end, was to me as an engineer one of the most graphic displays of the hurricane’s strength.”

--Wayne Brown, Former Transportation Commissioner
Southern District

“The extent of the storm didn’t hit us until the next morning when our public safety personnel, police, firemen and National Guardsmen started to rescue people off their rooftops.”

--Connie Moran, Mayor
City of Ocean Springs

KATRINA +10

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

“We all knew the bridge would be our link to true recovery. It was built for the future, and it has given us hope that we can build our town back for the future. The Gulf Coast will be even better than before.”

--Tim Kellar, Chancery Clerk
Hancock County

“MDOT executives provided the decisive, problem-solving leadership to make these bridge replacements happen within an extraordinary timeframe.”

--Ricky Lee, Former District 6 Engineer
Mississippi Department of Transportation

“Nobody could imagine the destruction Katrina unleashed.”

--Kay Miller, Downtown Services Manager
City of Biloxi

“When the new bridge opened, we felt that a door had opened to make us feel connected—both physically and emotionally.”

--Nancy Moynan, Owner of Maggie May’s
Bay St. Louis

“To have some small part in the rejoining of our community that was separated after these bridges came down is really a remarkable thing. The message given by MDOT officials is that the bridge is not finished until the art is up. This is a scale of public art that is usually seen only in large cities. It is a testament to Mississippi’s commitment to the arts.”

--Greg Moran, Sculptor and Ironworker
City of Biloxi

“The rebuilding of the bridge is a symbol of hope for all of us. When I heard the call for artists, I found it to be an opportunity for me to connect with my community and move forward as an artist.”

--Julie Mello, Artist
City of Biloxi