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News Release

SLP-07-05
February 2, 2007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Register Now for the Eighth Annual Smart Growth Conference for Southern Mississippi to Be Held May 9-10

BILOXI, Miss. – All over the United States, communities are using principles of smart growth to protect and enhance their natural environment while local economies grow and prosper. At the eighth annual Coastal Development Strategies Conference (Smart Growth), May 9-10 at the IP Casino Resort Spa, attendees will have the opportunity to dialogue, learn from each other and cooperate on selected issues to promote smart growth across the coastal region and into our rural areas.

This conference is hosted by the Comprehensive Resource Management Plan (CRMP) in association with the CRMP stakeholders and the Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce.

Two full days of conference will feature speakers and breakout sessions. This dynamic conference provides networking opportunities to form new partnerships, new ideas and discuss smart growth as a way to guide new development, seeking a better quality of life for all citizens.

CRMP is a program within the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (DMR). CRMP's mission is to develop a plan to sustain Mississippi's coastal resources while providing a healthy economy in the region.

"This annual smart growth conference is important to everyone who calls southern Mississippi home," said Tina Shumate, CRMP director. "We are carrying out our mission to address challenges and opportunities as we rebuild our Gulf Coast and grow as a region."

The multidisciplinary event draws elected officials, city and county staff, contractors, developers, bankers, planners, realtors, engineers, landowners, industry students, federal and state agencies, county boards of supervisors, lawyers, private and corporate entities, environmentalists, resource managers and other committed to rebuilding the Gulf Coast.

"Conference curriculum touches a range of issues and is vital to a myriad of professions and business leaders across the Gulf Coast," said Kimberly Nastasi, CEO of Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber, "It really has something for everyone."

Real estate agents can earn 10 hours of continuing education credit by attending the eighth annual Coastal Development Strategies Conference, and receipts will be provided to all other professions—such as, engineers, teachers and architects—to submit for credit to their respective organizations.

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The deadline for pre-registration is April 27, 2007 and is \$125 per person (\$80 for students). After April 27, the registration fee will be \$155 (until May 8) and on-site registration is \$175. Conference fees include two breakfasts, refreshment breaks, two lunches, one evening reception and conference materials.

For more information or to register for this year's conference, contact the DMR at (228) 374-5000 or the Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce at (228) 604-0014, or visit the DMR online at www.dmr.state.ms.us or the Coast Chamber at www.mscoastchamber.com.

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is dedicated to enhancing, protecting and conserving marine interests of the State by managing all marine life, public trust wetlands, adjacent uplands and waterfront areas to provide for the optimal commercial, recreational, educational and economic uses of these resources consistent with environmental concerns and social changes. Visit the DMR online at www.dmr.state.ms.us.

PHOTO CUTLINE: (SLP-07-05): WLOX-TV's David Elliott (left) introduces the participants in the mayors' post-Katrina panel discussion about the Coast's recovery held during last year's Coastal Development Strategies conference May 2-3, 2006. Pictured at table, from left: Mayor Dayton Whites of Lucedale, Lisa Bradley of Gulfport's Main Street Association, Ocean Springs Mayor Connie Moran, Moss Point Mayor Xavier Bishop, Gautier Alderman Jeff Wilkinson, Mayor Pro Tem Chip McDermott of Pass Christian, and David Staehling, Director of Administration with the City of Biloxi. This session was moderated by John McFarland of the Sun Herald.

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