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## **Commissioners Approve \$5.3 million in Construction Contracts**

With help from State, Port revitalizes Alabo & France Road Terminals

The Board of Commissioners of the Port of New Orleans has awarded \$5.3 million worth of construction contracts for major renovations to the Alabo Street Terminal to expand the wharf and refurbish the cargo shed that primarily handles steel and other metals. The project has been approved and funded through the Louisiana Port Priority Program, in which Louisiana public port authorities compete for funding based on the economic benefit that the project brings to the state.

Double Aught Construction, LLC, of Belle Chasse, La., was the lowest responsive bidder for a project to extend the wharf. The Board awarded the contract to Double Aught for \$2.6 million. The project will extend the wharf by 418 feet, providing a total of 1,731 feet of berthing space at the wharf, which is located in the Lower Ninth Ward. The existing wharf can fit two ships and the additional space will provide berthing for a third ship.

Another \$2.7 million contract to refurbish the dockside cargo warehouse was awarded to Crown Roofing Services, Inc. of Kenner, La. Crown will install a new roof and siding, reinforce the building's structural framework and upgrade the warehouse's electrical and lighting systems.

Crown was the lowest of seven responsive bidders and is a minority business enterprise. The Board has a policy of encouraging minority, disadvantaged and women-owned business enterprises to participate in bids as prime contractors or subcontractors.

The Alabo Street Terminal is operated by Pacorini Global Services, LLC. The warehouse at Alabo Street is approved to handle non-ferrous metals, such as copper, aluminum and zinc, traded on the London Metal Exchange.

"These terminal upgrades represent a strong commitment from the Port and the State of Louisiana to provide the best facilities possible for a valued tenant," said Gary LaGrange, Port President and CEO. "Pacorini Global is a critical player in the steel and metals industries and we look forward to working with the company to grow its business in New Orleans."

The two projects awarded today represent the majority of the work that is part of the \$7.7 million Alabo Terminal Project. About \$5.6 million is funded by the Louisiana Port Construction and Development Priority Program, which is administered through the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, and the remainder of the funding comes from the Port. The Port applied for the funds for Alabo in 2005.

As construction starts on the Alabo project, a new Port dredge is being built by Dredging Supply Company in Reserve as part of the Port of New Orleans 2006 Port Priority funding request. The

Board also took action on an item related to the Port of New Orleans 2008 Port Priority request, which will provide funding for improvements at the France Road Container Terminal, Berth 1. The Board gave LaGrange the authority to execute the agreement with the Louisiana Department of Transportation to receive the funds.

The France Road Terminals, located on the Inner Harbor Navigational Canal sustained heavy damage during Hurricane Katrina and ship access to the facility has been limited due to the siltation and planned closure of the Mississippi River-Gulf Outlet. However, the Port of New Orleans has signed a lease with Seaboard Marine for the facilities. Seaboard can revive operations at France Road because it operates a fleet of vessels that can gain access to France Road via the Mississippi River and the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal Lock.

We are excited about the opportunity to increase cargo to Central America with the help of Seaboard business in New Orleans and also to put portions of our France Road facility back in operation,” LaGrange said.

Seaboard currently has three ships in a twice weekly service between New Orleans and the North Central America region. Seaboard ships sail from New Orleans to Santo Tomas, Guatemala, and Puerto Cortes, Honduras, and are currently handled at the Napoleon Avenue Container Terminal. A leader in cargo trade throughout the Caribbean basin and Latin America, Seaboard operates a fleet of 40 cargo ships, which call on more than 25 countries.

The project at France Road is expected to cost \$6.7 million with \$6 million coming from the state and the remainder coming from the Port. The project consists of:

- Replacing the terminal lighting and the related underground electrical conduit systems
- Installing new outlets to power refrigerated cargo containers
- Replacing 29 acres of asphalt paving
- Installing new fencing and providing striping for a secured employee parking lot

Engineering design of the project is expected to take place in late 2008, with construction starting in the early 2009.

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