



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 29, 2010

**Spans Connect on Longest Cable Stay Bridge
In the Western Hemisphere**
Important Milestone for New Crossing Over the Mississippi River

New Roads, La. – The spans of the longest cable-stayed bridge in the Western Hemisphere were connected this morning, Wednesday, Dec. 29, 2010, a major milestone in the building of the [John James Audubon Bridge](#) over the Mississippi River in Louisiana.

While the moment was significant, the placing of the final girder was all done in the normal course of working on the \$408-million bridge, which stretches 1/3 of a mile over the River and connects the Pointe Coupee Parish/New Roads areas with the West Feliciana Parish/St. Francisville areas. The project began in May 2006 and is slated for completion in late 2011.

Construction of the spans began from both sides of the 500-foot tall towers in early 2010. Now connected, the bridge is still not accessible to vehicle traffic as more work needs to occur to complete the deck itself. Once completed, the bridge will have four travel lanes, 8-foot outside shoulders and 2-foot inside shoulders. The project also includes approximately 12 miles of new approach roads. It will provide the only traffic crossing point on the Mississippi between Baton Rouge, La., and Natchez, Miss., a distance of approximately 90 river miles

“The bridge will reduce commute times and promote economic development while providing a safe and efficient travel route for freight and shipping. The investment in the John James Audubon Bridge, as well as a total investment of \$4.6 billion in [Louisiana’s TIMED Program](#), is improving the quality of life for motorists, residents, and businesses by enhancing economic development,” said Department of Transportation and Development Secretary [Sherri H. LeBas, P.E.](#)

The bridge project is part of the [Louisiana TIMED Program](#) and is being constructed by Audubon Bridge Constructors (ABC), a joint venture of Flatiron Corporation, Granite Construction, and Parsons Transportation Group. The TIMED Program is the single largest transportation program in Louisiana history. The Program is designed to enhance economic development in Louisiana through an investment in transportation projects and is funded by a dedicated \$0.04 per gallon gasoline and motor fuels tax. It was created by Act 16 of the 1989 Louisiana Legislature and was approved by a vote of the people.

The bridge gets its name from John James Audubon (1785-1851), one of the world’s most renowned naturalist artists, dedicated his life to painting all of the birds in America. He painted 32 of his famous works in his *Birds of America* series while residing at Oakley Plantation in St. Francisville as a tutor to Eliza Pirrie in 1821. As Pointe Coupee and West Feliciana Parishes are widely regarded for their abundance of wildlife, amazing landscapes, and preserved historic



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structures from the days of Audubon, it is only fitting that the new bridge be named in his memory.

The [Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development \(DOTD\)](#) is committed to delivering transportation and public works systems that enhance the quality of life. In addition to more than 16,600 miles of roadway, including over 890 miles of interstate, DOTD supports the development of the state's aviation, marine and rail infrastructures. Through this work, we are able to facilitate economic development, create job opportunities, improve vital evacuation routes, and make critical freight corridors safer and more efficient.

For more information, please visit www.dotd.la.gov, email dotdcs@la.gov, or call DOTD's Customer Service Center at (225) 379-1232 or 1-877-4LADOTD (1-877-452-3683). Business hours are 7:30 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Motorists can access up-to-date travel information by dialing 511 or by visiting www.511la.org. Out of-state travelers can call 1-888-ROAD-511 (1-888-762-3511).

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