Significant new sunken discovery lauded

BERWICK (AP) Gov. Dave Treen flew to this St. Mary Parish town this week to announce what he said were significant new developments surrounding the discovery of a sunken 18th Century ship of coastal Louisiana.

Louisiana's Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism called it "the richest marine archaeological find in the state's history" and said the wreckage contains gold, silver and valuable artifacts.

The department presented its claims to the Interim Emergency Board, which Tuesday authorized spending $150,000 for tighter security because scavengers already have been sighted in coastal waters where the wreckage was found.

The board doles out money for special projects between legislative sessions and has about $4 million to spend on such emergencies.

"We're going to have to pay overtime to to wildlife agents who patrol the area and others," said Edgar "Sonny" Mouton, executive counsel to the governor.

That request for extra money wasn't on the board's regular agenda in Baton Rouge but was added as a special item. The panel also approved two other projects and deferred action on 17 others.

Approved were:

- $120,000 for the Department of Education to give cost-of-living raises to foreign associate teachers in the Second Language Program. The department had asked $180,000.
- $24,800 for the Military Staff Duty Officers' Program, instituted last year at Jackson Barracks in New Orleans. It got no money in the 1980-81 general appropriations bill.

Among items deferred was a request by the State Board of Regents to spend $200,000 on attorney fees and for a special attorney to defend against a federal suit calling for further desegregation of state universities.

Last week, the regents agreed to hire former Louisiana Supreme Court Justice Mark E. Barham to try to negotiate a settlement in the case.

If no settlement is reached, Barham is to represent the state in an April 1981 court trial on the matter. Mouton explained the request will be considered later with other requests from university management boards and schools involved in the lawsuit.

"It's just a matter of getting it all consolidated. A couple of schools and boards are talking about hiring attorneys and we just want it all coordinated," said Mouton.

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