Treen Dedicates Port Of Vermilion

The Wind Up and the Pitch: Governor Dave Treen breaks a Bottle of Champagne Against a Bulkhead at the Port

By Chris Hand
Advertiser Area Writer

BANCKER — With the crack of a champagne bottle against a bulkhead, the new Port of Vermilion was officially dedicated yesterday.

Governor Dave Treen flew in by helicopter from Baton Rouge for the ceremony and hailed the opening of the Port as a "great day for the people of Vermilion Parish.

"I'm thoroughly convinced the off-shore industry has a great future and that we have only begun to tap the great sources of energy we have here in Louisiana," the governor said.

Treen predicted the number of businesses leasing property at the Port would pick up as soon as the nation's oil glut disappeared.

The Port will also offer one half-mile of steel bulkheading, complete sewage treatment facilities and underground electrical service.

Besides servicing the oil and gas industry, it is also hoped that the Port will be used to ship agricultural commodities such as rice and soybean grown in Vermilion Parish.

So far, three companies have leased land here.

The Port, now hardly more than two long and dusty piers off the Vermilion River, is still under construction. Even as Treen and state legislators Ted Haik, Sammy Theriot and Cecil Picard addressed the crowd of about 500, the constant thud of a steam pile driver could be heard in the background.

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When it is completed, officials of the Abbeville Harbor and Terminal District, the governing body in charge of the Port, say the facility will provide 21 sites including 1 1/2 miles of waterfront.

expansion of city sewage lines.

According to Abbeville Mayor Larry Campisi, residents here have waited nearly 11 years since this neighborhood was annexed into the town to receive city sewage.

Yesterday, in honor of the state funding the project, the governor and several local Abbeville officials held a groundbreaking ceremony.

"Now let's see how well you politicians can sling mud," Treen joked after the dedicated officials ceremoniously dug their shovels into the ground.