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***Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality Officially Establishes Louisiana Military Environmental Alliance to Address Restoration of Military Lands***

**BATON ROUGE, LA — November 19, 2024:** As Americans marked the Veterans Day holiday last week, today the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) proudly announces the official establishment of the Louisiana Military Environmental Alliance (LMEA), a groundbreaking program designed to accelerate environmental restoration and resource management at Department of Defense (DOD)-managed and State-owned National Guard properties in Louisiana. This initiative — a product of significant planning and interagency coordination with DOD and Louisiana National Guard — will prioritize safety, ecosystem restoration and sustainable land management across military and former military properties throughout the State.

The Alliance's collaborative focus will include some of the region's most strategically important military installations and training sites, such as Barksdale Air Force Base, Camp Minden and Fort Johnson, as well as Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) including Camp Claiborne and Camp Livingston. The joint initiative marks a critical commitment from LDEQ, DOD and Louisiana National Guard to ensure these lands meet rigorous environmental standards while continuing to support the military's operational readiness and the State's environmental integrity.



LDEQ pays tribute to Veterans Day at its headquarters in the Galvez Building as LMEA is officially established.

"Louisiana is crucial to our National Security — not only for energy but also for our critically important military and defense infrastructure. It's imperative to restore these lands," said **LDEQ Secretary Aurelia S. Giacometto**, "By working together with DOD and the Louisiana National Guard to employ remediation efforts and sustainable practices to safeguard the health, safety and the protection of our Nation's security while also fostering long-term environmental health."

"We are very excited to see this initiative come to fruition," said **Louisiana State Senator Adam Bass**, who serves the district that houses Barksdale Air Force Base, "Our military sites play an integral role our State's economy and National security. Through the work of LMEA, we can ensure these lands are responsibly managed and environmentally secure, benefitting our military, Louisiana as a whole and our local communities."

"The Louisiana National Guard is committed to protecting our State and its people — not just through our service but also by ensuring our training sites are safe, sustainable and resilient," said **Louisiana Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Thomas Friloux**, "Through the Louisiana Military Environmental Alliance, we're thrilled to join forces with LDEQ to restore and maintain these essential lands. Together, we'll enhance environmental standards across our properties, enabling support to our local communities and our combat readiness."

## **Key Objectives of the Louisiana Military Environmental Alliance**

LMEA is the primary coordinating body within LDEQ to engage with DOD and Louisiana National Guard to oversee environmental cleanup and restoration of designated military sites in the State. The initiative's core goals are as follows:

- 1. Support for Military Readiness**

LMEA is dedicated to ensuring that our brave men and women have more lands available to conduct their military activities. We will prioritize lands that strengthen operational readiness at DOD and Louisiana National Guard installations.

- 2. Efficient Site Assessment and Remediation**

LMEA seeks to accelerate the assessment and remediation of identified contaminated sites across active, former and training military installations, aligned with both state and federal environmental standards.

- 3. Protection of Human Health and the Environment**

The Alliance places a high priority on protecting soil, air and water quality throughout and following the remediation process.

- 4. Sustainable Practices and Transparency**

The Alliance will adopt sustainable practices, such as the use of eco-friendly and newer technologies, to accelerate efforts and adapt new resource conservation methods for remediation, waste management and energy use.

The Alliance's efforts are supported by a wide array of state and federal environmental laws, including the Comprehensive Environmental Response and Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA). These combined efforts aim to prevent the spread of environmental contamination and to enable greater ability to our military to conduct military activities.

"LMEA is a model for how agencies can work together to support important ideas like environmental and public health," said **U.S. Air Force Regional Environmental Coordinator Michael Ackerman**, "The Alliance is not only an



LDEQ Secretary Aurelia S. Giacometto honors LDEQ employees who are veterans of the U.S. military in a tribute to Veterans Day.

investment in our military lands but also an investment in Louisiana’s local communities — and a testament to the power of collaboration to achieve real, sustainable change."

LDEQ’s project lead **Madeline Abernethy** added, "The launch of LMEA underscores the importance of collaboration in tackling complex environmental issues. By bringing together expertise from LDEQ, DOD and the Louisiana National Guard, we are better positioned to address historical environmental impacts and build a foundation for sustainable stewardship that benefits our communities and strengthens Louisiana’s resilience."



Secretary Giacometto, Madeline Abernethy, Michael Ackerman, U.S. Air Force, David Carr, U.S. Army, and staff from both partners plan the formation of LMEA in August.

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