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MEDIA RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thanks to Sen. Roger Wicker (R-Miss.) for Questioning Nominee for Asst. Secretary Over Army Corps About Bonnet Carré Spillway

For assets and images related to this release visit this [Dropbox link](#).

(GULFPORT, Miss., May 16, 2025) – The Mississippi Sound Coalition extends heartfelt appreciation to Senator Roger Wicker (R-Miss.), for his questions about the Bonnet Carré Spillway at a Senate confirmation hearing for President Trump’s nominee to serve as Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, Adam Telle.

Since the Assistant Secretary nominee would oversee water-related structures along the entire Mississippi River, including the Bonnet Carré spillway, Sen. Wicker educated those who watched (video linked below) about how the river affects the Mississippi Sound. We thank Senator Wicker for asking Mr. Telle to include the Mississippi Sound Coalition as a stakeholder in studies about which spillways are open

Senator Wicker:

“Let’s talk about the Bonnet Carre spillway. We’ve already talked about how long the Mississippi River is and the Missouri River. Thirty-one states contribute to what runs by the state of Louisiana and Mississippi, as it gets almost to the Gulf. By the time it gets there, it’s full of bacteria, nutrients, fertilizer, runoff, sediment and other things leading to algae blooms in the Gulf.

When the water gets high, there are a number of spillways that can be opened to prevent flooding of a number of very important areas. In 2019, the Bonnet Carre spillway was opened for a total of



123 days. It spilled into the Mississippi Sound, a saltwater body important for fishing, changing it more into a fresh water. This was hugely damaging, costing many, many jobs. We can’t possibly have this happen again. There are times when the spillway can be opened to take some of the fresh water into a saltwater area but not that much. Will you agree that the Army Corps should include stakeholders such as the Mississippi Sound

coalition and stakeholders in both Louisiana, Arkansas, and Mississippi in a comprehensive study of which spillways are open?”

Mr. Telle:

“Senator Wicker, I would gladly take input from stakeholders, as you rightly point out, there are facilities up and down the Mississippi Rivers. The Bonnet Carre which diverts water into Lake Pontchartrain, and ultimately, as you say, into the Mississippi Sound, affecting the ecosystems there. These are the types of tradeoffs that we have to discuss when we talk about operating the Corps of Engineers. Many facilities preventing a flood upstream may mean effects on places like the Mississippi Sound. It is very important that the Corps of Engineers has clear input from stakeholders from across a waterway, from up and down to understand the impacts. These are complex systems and we could use as much input as we could possibly get to try to make sure that we get the balance right.”

Senator Wicker: *“Thank you for that answer., Madame Chairman. I realize we've gone over, but it is a matter of thousands and thousands of jobs up and down the Mississippi River. Thank you.”*

[Watch Video of Bonnet Carré Q & A at the Hearing](#)

Adam Telle is a magna cum laude graduate in computer science and communication from Mississippi State University’s Bagley College of Engineering. He worked for 10 years for Senator Thad Cochran of Mississippi and rose through the ranks to become Deputy Chief of Staff and Legislative Director.

[Click Here to Read Senator Wicker’s Press Release About the Hearing](#)

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MISSISSIPPI SOUND COALITION (MSSC)

The Mississippi Sound Coalition’s mission is to restore and protect the ecosystem of the Mississippi Sound estuary and the way of life and economies of coastal communities that depend on it, based on good science and fair public policy. We seek win-win solutions, preferably by negotiated agreements and legislation, but, when necessary, members who chose to be parties engage in litigation in support of our Mission. Our scientific research, public education, and advocacy are focused primarily on ways and means to avoid or mitigate harm to the Mississippi Sound caused by the Bonnet Carré Spillway and other negative impacts.

The Coalition provides public education on the subject, and, if necessary, engages in litigation. Members of the Coalition include Harrison County, Hancock County, the Mississippi cities of Biloxi, D'Iberville, Gulfport, Long Beach, Pass Christian, Diamondhead, Bay St. Louis, Waveland, Ocean Springs, Gautier, Pascagoula, the Mississippi Hotel & Lodging Association and Mississippi Commercial Fisheries United.

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