

ExxonMobil plans \$20 billion investment to Gulf Coast region

Caresse Jackman , WWL 11:01 PM. CST March 09, 2017



NEW ORLEANS -- From construction to engineering, ExxonMobil's new gulf initiative promises to create 12,000 full time jobs in Louisiana and Texas.

"These investments began in 2013 and they're expected to continue until at least 2022. There are projects on the horizon, and we're hoping that Louisiana can take advantage of those," Stephanie Cargile, Public Affairs Manager for ExxonMobil Baton Rouge said."

ExxonMobil plans on expanding their Port Allen Aviation Project, located at the Port Allen Lubricants Plant.

"It's going to create 45 permanent jobs at the Port Allen facility, and it was a project that actually created 400 direct construction jobs," Cargile said.

The company is also looking into building a plastics manufacturing facility along the Gulf Coast.

"It's these types of projects that we're hoping that Louisiana can compete for," Cargile said.

Not everyone, however, is thrilled about ExxonMobil's announcement.

"It seems a little ironic that they're calling it the 'Growing the Gulf Initiative,' because they're saying that, but at the same time, Louisiana is losing a football field of wetlands every hour," Matt Rota, Senior Policy Director with Gulf Restoration Network said.

Gulf Restoration Network is an environmental advocacy organization in New Orleans. Rota says creating jobs is great for our economy, but so is protecting our state's wetlands.

"We're going to have to spend over \$50 billion to fix the Louisiana coast in the most recent coastal master plan," Rota said, "They're going to spend \$20 billion on this initiative. If they could put even a portion of that towards fixing what they and their colleagues have broken that would go a long way to basically putting their money where their mouth is."

Cargile says ExxonMobil does care about protecting the environment.

"In Baton Rouge, our over emissions have been reduced by 40 percent since 1990. And we're investing in environmental performance. We've invested about \$1.4 billion over the last five years to improve our environmental performance," Cargile said.

There's no word or set date at this time for this proposed facility on the gulf coast. ExxonMobil says this expansion covers 11 chemical, refining lubricant and liquefied natural gas projects along the Texas and Louisiana coasts.

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